

Mettiko Bhikkhu

against the • *grain*

Disclosing
Unscientific Postscript to

Satipaṭṭhāna

In memory of my brother Dietmar (1962-2022)
whose skills as a designer and craftsman left their mark
all over Muttodaya Monastery.

Mettiko Bhikkhu

against the • *grain*

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to
Satipaṭṭhāna



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Mettiko Bhikkhu

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Disclosing Unscientific Postscript to Satipaṭṭhāna

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It is indeed for *a sensing one* that I declare: “This is suffering,” and “This is the origin of suffering,” and “This is the cessation of suffering,” and “This is the practice leading to the cessation of suffering.”

A 3. 62

For one who exists, what interests him most is existing, and his being interested in existing is his actuality.

Søren Kierkegaard

The reader is presumed to be subjectively engaged with an anxious problem, the problem of his existence, which is also the problem of his suffering ...

Only in a vertical view, straight down into the abyss of his own personal existence, is a man capable of apprehending the perilous insecurity of his situation; and only a man who does apprehend this is prepared to listen to the Buddha’s Teaching.¹

Ñāṇavīra Bhikkhu

Warnings

This is not a guide to meditation. In the entire book there are hardly any instructions on how to actually meditate.

There is a widespread opinion that holds that one cannot disclose reality through thinking, that this can only come about through meditation: “Thoughts are mere figments of our imagination, only that which is experienced in meditation is the real deal.”

This book proceeds from the viewpoint that it is not relevant whether reality is disclosed through thinking or through meditation, but rather whether this disclosing is based on knowing&seeing according to reality. Whether such a knowing&seeing is attainable for us depends on our fundamental view of the world.

This book is meant to help us in acquiring a world view that is suited to this purpose. So, maybe in some way, it is a guide (in addition) to meditation.

Some of its contents will go against the grain for some people. That doesn't matter as long as they are prepared to examine their inner resistance and do not reject the unfamiliar just because it is unfamiliar.

But if on the other hand *nothing* in this book goes against the grain for one reader or the other, then that is not necessarily a good sign. Sooner or later the practice *must* go against the grain of old conditioning in order to progress.

Often we feel uncomfortable when we encounter terms or expressions that we are not used to. I have translated some central terms of the Buddha's teaching in a way that deviates from other translations available “on the market”. These terms are marked with an asterisk (*) when they first become relevant. They are dealt with in the glossary in exactly that same order – not only translated but also thoroughly examined.

Thus my readers can come and see for themselves that occasional deviations from the norm certainly are based on my own judgement, but this is in no way a result of haste or carelessness.

In most cases, my translations are more literal than other translations, which have sometimes been based on commentarial explanations, often extended in expression but narrowed down in meaning. I have also taken pains to carefully keep interpretation and translation separate.

The explanations in the glossary certainly illuminate the main text, but they are very specific at times. Readers who already find the main text difficult, or simply trust the author in advance, may well read the glossary later on or even not at all. My “unscientific post-script to satipaṭṭhāna” can also be understood without this detailed information – at least that’s my hope.

Knowing&seeing according to reality is holistic. Any attempt to disclose this holism for readers who are entering entirely new territory here, naturally has to start somewhere. In a certain sense this is a contradiction. Holism does not “start” anywhere.

Whether this attempt is successful or not, well this is something the readers have to decide. Maybe it’s not a good book, but it is in any case an original one, and of a kind that has not been on the market before – to my knowledge. For any shortcomings I take responsibility.

I would like to express my gratitude to all those who have helped me write this book: Ven. Yodhako Bhikkhu whose skills as a former professional writer were invaluable for untangling the golden thread; Michael Sansom who turned the text into real English; Lothar Scholl-Röse whose editorial advice for the original German book proved useful for the English version² as well; Ven. Jayadhamma who did the final proof-reading.

Last not least a thank-you to Venerable Amaro Bhikkhu who first brought up the idea to re-write this book in English.

METTIKO BHIKKHU

Yet another book on satipaṭṭhāna?

In summer 2021 I joined up with two knowledgeable Dhamma friends, Dr. Alfred Weil and Raimund Beyerlein, with the aim of translating the Mahāsatiipaṭṭhāna Sutta (D 22). Not that there was a shortage of translations of this long discourse on satipaṭṭhāna or of its “little sister” in the Majjhima Nikāya (M 10), but we felt that the German translations available were inadequate in capturing the true nature of satipaṭṭhāna.

We set ourselves the task of translating the text “objectively”, not influenced by that which we had previously learnt, free of preconditioned opinions about the contents. We found it to be impossible! We realised that we cannot understand anything without first having a standpoint, without having a personal background: let alone translating it and putting it into words. Even the Buddha, the best teacher for the highest number of beings, had a standpoint – that of a fully awakened one.

The greatest benefit that came out of our meetings was that we were able to point out our pre-shaped standpoints and thought patterns to each other. We saw that our points of view arose through certain conditions and that they could be changed. Of course we can’t assume the standpoint of a Buddha, but there are views that are more suited to drawing closer to the way a liberated being sees the world, and there are approaches that are less appropriate. This too, was an important realisation for us. But even more significant than this was the following insight: the way *how* we realise something, *how* we view our experience, *how* we view our existence – to understand this is virtually the *essence* of satipaṭṭhāna!

In the Dhamma talks that I have given over the last years, I have repeatedly drawn attention to an approach to the Buddha’s teaching which aims to gain understanding directly from experience, not from theories or inference. This approach is sometimes called phenomenology and it is the most important tool of existential philosophy. In the 1960s, the English bhikkhu Ñāṇavīra pointed out the value of this approach for gaining an initial understanding of the Dhamma. His *Notes on Dhamma* and his letters have become a kind of standard

reference on this topic, but for many people they are not easy to access. This may be due to the unfamiliar terminology being used, to the highly condensed trains of thought, or to the amount of space that is dedicated to the refutation of inadequate but widespread concepts.

It seems that in some of my Dhamma talks I had succeeded in explaining this existential approach, and had made it more digestible, for I was asked if I could write a book in this style: a book that would illustrate the subject matter in a vivid and clear way – a kind of “Ñāṇavīra for Newcomers”.

At first I was hesitant. Would I be able to live up to the high bar that his *Notes on Dhamma* had set? Would such a book be worth the considerable effort involved? Would I be able to reach the readers?

A few aspects concerning how we approach the Buddhadhamma, that Venerable Ñāṇavīra had not dealt with, came to my mind: aspects which are important in my own practice and could be useful for others too. And so after three decades as a translator, it was about time for me to put down my own thoughts. And something that Venerable Ñāṇavīra stated in one of his letters holds true for me as well: “If I have one reader only who benefits from it I shall be satisfied.” So I pulled myself together. No more excuses!

About 60 years have now passed since the *Notes on Dhamma* were first published. As an entry point to the Buddha’s teaching, the “vertical view into one’s own personal existence” has established itself as a promising alternative to old-school exegetical models which follow scholarly commentarial literature. So I can count on an increased readership from people who are willing to make friends with unfamiliar perspectives. And in contrast to the Venerable Ñāṇavīra’s situation, I do not stand with my back to the wall, up against the whole world of Buddhist scholars. I can forgo detailed discussions of scholarly digressions, of findings of Buddhology, and of explanations from the commentarial tradition. Instead I can focus on writing about how one should see things without having to

explain how one should not see them. A brief mention of other positions and models of thinking should suffice.

Actually, there would be nothing to add to the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta if the learned, scientific world-view – this distance from ourselves – was not so widespread. Therefore my text is meant to be a decidedly *unscientific* postscript, serving as an aid to gaining an understanding of the teaching which is free from useless approaches and patterns of thought.

The subtitle of this book is at the same time a little homage to the pioneer of existential philosophy, Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855). His most important work, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to the Philosophical Crumbs*, discusses in a sharp-witted and often ironical-humorous way the “objective” mode of thinking of scholars, who are severed from their own experience, from their own existence.

If, of course, you are willing to assume that abstract thinking is supreme, it follows that science and the thinkers are proud to abandon existence, leaving the rest of us to face the worst. Yes, something also follows for the abstract thinker himself, that he, also being one who exists, must in one way or another be distraught.^{3 a}

Søren Kierkegaard

This postscript here, however, is not *concluding*, finishing or closing anything. But rather, it is meant to *unlock* the door to successful practice. It is, so I hope, *dis-closing*.

a These numbers refer to the original quotes or notes in the appendix.

PART 1

—

DISCLOSING SATIPAṬṬHĀNĀ

The Discourse – *Introduction*

Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was living among the Kurus. It was a town of the Kurus named Kam-māsadhamma. There indeed the Blessed One addressed the *bhikkhus*^{*} thus: “Bhikkhus.” – “Venerable sir,” the bhikkhus replied. The Blessed One said this:

“Bhikkhus, this is the *direct*^{*b} path for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow&lamentation, for the disappearance of *pain&grief*^{*}, for the attainment of the appropriate method, for the realisation of *Nibbāna*^{*} – namely, the four satipaṭṭhānā.

Which four? Here, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu abides with the body body-*contemplating*^{*}, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having removed *greed&grief*^{*} in regard to the world. He abides with feelings feeling-*contemplating*, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having removed greed&grief in regard to the world. He abides with the heart heart-*contemplating*, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having removed greed&grief in regard to the world. He abides with *things*^{*} thing-*contemplating*, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having removed greed&grief in regard to the world.

b Important terms are explained in detail in the glossary: meaning, etymology and possible alternative translations are all addressed. These terms are set in *italics* and marked with an * the first time they become relevant in the overall context of the book. Further terms are discussed in the main text itself.

1. The Inside of the Looking Glass

The discourses on satipaṭṭhāna are recognised by many experts as being the core texts on mindfulness practice or insight practice. Many consider this practice to virtually be the essence, or culmination of what the Buddha taught. The application of mindfulness as a universal tool is of central importance here.

But mindfulness is also the tool of choice for coping systems for life that are less religious or spiritual in nature: therapies for stress reduction, managerial training, methods for enhancing mental effectiveness in professions, sports and war. Mindfulness seems to have become some kind of cure-all remedy for all problems.

The introduction to this discourse, however, states unmistakably that the Buddha did not teach psychotherapy or wellness: neither did he have it in mind to help surgeons, air traffic controllers, figure skaters and snipers achieve more professional success. It is about nothing less than the end of all suffering, Nibbāna, the highest goal in the Buddha's dispensation.

We also gather from this introduction that satipaṭṭhāna clearly consists *not only* of mindfulness, and that the practice requires effort and some preliminary work. Maybe we have surmised that *greed&grief in regard to the world*, which, according to the text have to be removed beforehand, do not automatically disappear by themselves. Two quotes from the *suttas** confirm this hunch:

And what is the nutriment for the four satipaṭṭhānā? It should be said: "The three kinds of good conduct (by body, speech and mind)."⁴

A 10.61

Well then, bhikkhu, right at the very beginning improve in wholesome things. And what is the beginning of wholesome things? Virtue that is well purified and view that is straight. Then, bhikkhu, when your virtue will be well purified and your view straight, based upon virtue,

established upon virtue, you may develop the four satipaṭṭhānā in a threefold way.⁵

S47.3

Well, purified virtue is certainly more than the therapists ask of us, but we can probably relate to this advice. Good behaviour gives us a quiet, clear conscience which “sleeps in thunder”, as the saying goes, undisturbed by greed&grief. As for calm and clarity – we can easily imagine them to be the preconditions for the kind of inner state in which we can unmovedly *abide contemplating*.

But what is meant by *straight view*? Isn’t it automatically part of mindful, objective observation? (It certainly won’t escape the readers that this is a rhetorical question; that is unless they skipped over the foreword.)

Unmoved is not uninvolved

It may appear strange to many people that there should be different *ways* of seeing, different kinds of viewing. They take it for granted that we live in an objectively existing world that looks the same to everyone. How else could it possibly be? And that we are meant to discover this very world as it is, without interfering. And that this holds true for discovering the material world through science, and for discovering mental or spiritual things as well. If there are to be different ways of seeing, different world views at all, then this objective observation is the only correct one, the straight one.

When we try to scrutinise this assessment, the first thing we might discover is that the assessment itself is a part of this world view. It is tightly connected to a belief in the fundamental correctness of science that pervades and supports our system of education. It is the *prevailing* view, but this is not only a phenomenon of our times, because belief in science and our system of education are not the *causes* behind our tendency towards objectivity, but rather *products* thereof. Their cause is deeply rooted in human nature, something that will be uncovered over the course of this book.

With this tendency towards objectivity, our engagement with the Buddha's teaching is also not spared. And so it will not come as a surprise that it is sometimes said that Buddhism is a kind of science, and that a meditator is a kind of researcher, who has to watch the processes of the mind in an objective and uninvolved way.

Proponents of this idea feel vindicated through statements in the teaching such as this one: "All things are not-self. It's all about seeing this with wisdom."⁶ Passages like this are taken as a call to adopt the impersonal, scientific point of view. Later we will examine whether the Buddha really meant it in this way. For now, let us ask the question: "Is wisdom the same as science?"⁷

The basic attitude of science, the attempt to be an uninvolved, objective observer of a world "out there", a world which is the same for all (including mental processes), only deals with *the world*, not with *the observer* of the world. It does not deal with the subject, the experiencing person:

Let the scholarly investigator labour with tireless zeal, let him even shorten his life in the enthusiastic service of science; let the speculative thinker spare neither time nor diligence; they are still not infinitely, personally, impassionedly interested. On the contrary, they would even rather not be so. Their observations are to be objective, disinterested.⁸

Søren Kierkegaard

So what does that mean? Let us imagine ourselves to be a fully wired-up test person (a guinea pig) in a neurological laboratory. The researcher inflicts pain on us by either the prick of a needle or an electric shock. The scientist observes objectively and disinterestedly: each time the button is pressed peaks show up on the encephalogram. They may even call this phenomenon "pain", but usually such amateurish expressions are avoided – "sensation" is the term of choice. The scientist, however, neither observes pain nor sensation,

but rather only peaks on the encephalogram, which arise dependent on a certain stimulus.

That pain *hurts*, is something that only we the test person know. We are infinitely, personally, *impassionedly* interested.

This objective view is not the domain of science alone. The field of humanities has its objective researchers too – the scholars. They too do not wish to be involved in their field of study. Calling them “disinterested” is not an insult to them; it is what they aspire to, their claim: it literally means “not to be in the way, to be uninvolved”.

The scholar’s whole concern is to eliminate or ignore the individual point of view in an effort to establish the objective truth – a would-be impersonal synthesis of public facts. The scholar’s essentially horizontal view of things, seeking connexions in space and time, and his historical approach to the texts, disqualify him from any possibility of understanding a *Dhamma** that the Buddha himself has called *akālika*, ‘*timeless*’.⁹

Ñāṇavīra Bhikkhu

Scholars in the field of Buddhism are not only made up of experts in comparative religion, orientalist and other outsiders. Also within the tradition of “professing” Buddhists, an extensive scholasticism emerged in the centuries after the Buddha – the Abhidhamma Piṭaka (written later, but still part of the canon), commentaries to the discourses and summarising works like the Visuddhimagga. These texts are so voluminous that many of their readers may well anxiously wonder whether it is really necessary to know all of this. Good news for them: “No!”

On the contrary: in all religions, scholasticism includes a shift towards objectivity. It is therefore better, if one aims for an understanding of a teaching that deals with the personal, subjective problem of suffering, not to be burdened by scholastic tangle, not to be confused and impeded by it.

So, if science and scholasticism cannot help with a subjective problem, or rather, with *the* subjective problem, then maybe we should try philosophy. What do the wisdom teachings of the philosophers have to offer. What do they say about the one straight view?

At once we notice that they not only have an abundance of answers to offer; all these answers are based on different fundamental assumptions or views, among them once more the mentioned tendency towards objectivity.

In the field of philosophy, it is logical positivism or rationalism or realism that represent the branch that tries to gain understanding in a distanced way, by drawing inferences and at the same time banishing the observing, experiencing – and yes, suffering – human being from its world-view:

§ 1: The world is all that is the case.

§ 1.1: The world is the totality of facts, not of things.

§ 2: What is the case – a fact – is the existence of states of affairs.¹⁰

Ludwig Wittgenstein

To avoid any misunderstandings here, the logical, scientific approach of course has its place and merit in many fields where knowledge is acquired, for example in logic and science. This is not disputed for a moment!

Now, acquiring *knowledge, understanding, realisation* or *cognizance* is a central topic in the Buddhadhamma too – it's all about insight, wisdom, investigation of things. But it is not about things *in* existence, out there, but rather about existence, being or Dasein itself – the relationship between the experiencing, feeling, *sensing one** and that which is experienced, felt, sensed, as the quotes at the very beginning of this book have already suggested.

This means the researcher – the experiencing subject – has to become the focal point of the research. Then logic and objectivity cannot function any more, because the successful coping, or even

better: the mastering of our unsatisfactory existence, the *overcoming of sorrow&lamentation*, the *disappearance of pain&grief*, is not an objective affair, not a field of study in science or humanities, not a problem to be solved by logic. The solution to this problem, however, is exactly what the Buddha teaches.

Bhikkhus, both formerly and now I teach suffering and the cessation of suffering too.

M 22

This Dhamma that I have attained is profound, hard to see and hard to understand, peaceful and sublime, unattainable by logic, subtle, to be understood by the wise.¹¹

M 26

In order to become one of these wise ones, it is not sufficient to only direct one's attention outwards, trying to understand suffering as a problem *in* existence. The suffering individuals have to look inside, into their own being, in order to see, where and how this suffering arises, where and how it can be brought to an end. Introspection and self-reflexion are required. For this purpose, our environment, our world, serves as a mirror – as contemporary master, Venerable Ayyā Khemā, expressed it.

Introspection does not exist in the world of science. A mirror of self-reflexion does not appear in the sterile view of the barren world of logic. So what could then constitute the straight view? What alternatives to the distance from ourselves do we have?

Mirror, mirror – without wall?

The introduction of the Satipaṭṭhāna *Sutta** tells us to contemplate body, feelings, heart and things. But as we have hopefully understood by now, it is not about an uninvolved looking at facts. The inner *state of the observer* is mentioned in the discourse as well: *ardent, fully aware, mindful, without greed&grief*.

Many people who consider themselves religious or spiritual have long ago realised that it is all about one's own inner state, and that answers to the great questions of existence are not to be found "out there": "Who or what am I? Where did I come from? Where will I go? Why do I suffer? What is the meaning of life? What's all the fuss about anyway?"

Salvation is not to be found in the dusty world of the scholars. That science doesn't know the answers to the truly deep and important issues of life: well, many people are aware of this.

And as a logical consequence they turn away from the cold world of logic. In the face of the bleakness of science, they look for comfort through inwardness. They replace the prevalent cult of consumerism in a culture of materialism with the cultivation of spiritual values. Their understandable counter-reaction, however, can take the struggle for the straight view to the other extreme. For example, advocating attitudes like those below:

"Since the world does not offer answers to the questions of existence, it must be the world that is at fault. The world, at least our base everyday world, does not really exist. Answers are to be found only beyond normal experience, in a mystical world, in a non-dualistic way of being, in a divine state of consciousness, behind, beyond, or above the normal things. These things around us do not really exist; they are just wrongly interpreted as real by the mind. Even that which I experience to be myself merely veils my true existence, my true Self. Normal reality does in reality not really exist – at least not *like this!*"

This represents an overemphasis on subjectivity, a trend that in philosophy is referred to as idealism. Its ideas are found in religious or spiritual traditions too.

All is deception, and deliriously I live!¹²

Pietro Metastasio

Illusion works impenetrable,
Weaving webs innumerable,
Her gay pictures never fail,
Crowds each on other, veil on veil,
Charmer who will be believed
By man who thirsts to be deceived.¹³

Ralph Waldo Emerson

The world is only as real as a mirror image of a city.¹⁴

आदि शंकर^c

It is claimed that everything is mind-made, or even just a mere illusion – the talk is of the “artistic painter heart” or of the “dream character of life”. Is this the straight view we are searching for? Or do we once more encounter problems?

Let us raise a few critical questions here:

The image in a mirror has no existence of its own. It is dependent on the mirrored object. But if there is nothing real apart from the mirror image, then what is it that is being mirrored? And what is the mirror attached to? What happens to the object when the mirror is smashed to pieces?

If pain and grief are but a dream, why do we suffer from them? What could we do to *change* the indisputable fact that we *are* indeed suffering?

If existence is understood to be but an illusion, the question arises: “Compared to what?”

c शंकराचार्य

One problem with idealistic tenets is their tendency to ignore the laws of thought, especially the first; the law of identity. Which states: “A thing is what it is.” Idealist thinking says: “A thing is not what it is (it merely seems to be).”

The laws of thought are not based on inferences, meaning they are not inferred using the methods of *logic*. Rather, they are the foundations of (sane) *reason*. One must not get the two of them muddled up. Later in this book, however, we will see that when we try to grasp our subjective existence by way of thinking, we will invariably violate the laws of thought, we will always be restricted by the limits of thinking, no matter which attitude we assume. Logical thinking is not sufficient to realise freedom from suffering – the Buddha already shared this shattering news with us on page 24. But the solution to the problem is not to be found through violating the laws of thought, but rather through transcending thought. For the time being, let us say that correct thinking is by all means useful!

These two extremes – the idea that a world out there exists independent of the one experiencing it, and the idea(l) that the world is just imaginary – can be regarded as two kinds of metaphysics, two fundamental assumptions^d, from which the respective correlating propositions about life, the universe and all the rest can be derived. Both views were already around at the time of the Buddha.

Sitting sideways then the metaphysician Brahmin said to the Blessed One:

“How about the statement, Master Gotama: ‘all exists *objectively**’?”

“Brahmin, ‘all exists objectively’ is the prevailing kind of *metaphysics**.”

“Master Gotama, is it then like this: ‘all does *not really** exist’?”

d Compare with Martin Heidegger on *the* question of metaphysics: “How does it happen that there is something rather than nothing?” („Warum ist überhaupt Seiendes und nicht vielmehr Nichts?“)

“Brahmin, ‘all does not really exist’ is the second kind of metaphysics.” [...]

Having avoided both these extremes, the *Tathāgata** teaches Dhamma by the middle.”¹⁵

S 12.48

Acquiring understanding in the middle

To fully understand what the Buddha meant by “by the middle” we are still lacking a few prerequisites at this stage. But we can make a start by discussing “the middle” between the two aforementioned extremes of, “the world is out there” and “the world is within here”.

By the eye ... by the ear ... by the nose ... by the tongue ... by the body ... by the mind one is *in the world* a perceiver of the world, a conceiver of the world. That by which one is in the world a perceiver of the world, a conceiver of the world – this is called the world in the Noble One’s discipline.¹⁶

S 35.116

So, by the senses we are *in the world* – this is the safeguard against the notion that the world is only *within ourselves*, as a mere illusion. But the senses at the same time *are* the world – there is no world independent of the one experiencing it.

We find something similar, even if not to its full extent, in a certain branch of philosophy; namely phenomenology and existential philosophy. This does not deal with an “objectively” existing world separated from the experiencer but instead with phenomena, that is, the experience of things that exist *for our Dasein*, i.e. *for our being-there*. The proponents of this school of thought examine the relationship to a world of which the experiencer is a part, indeed the centre; a world which he can disclose in a very personal and direct way through the phenomena themselves, unhampered by epistemological premises.

“World” ... is rather a characteristic of Dasein itself.¹⁷

If no Dasein exists, no world is “there” either.

The “scandal of philosophy” is not that the proof for “Dasein of Things outside of me” has yet to be given, but that such proofs are expected and attempted again and again.

Martin Heidegger

This kind of philosophy contributes many useful ideas concerning how we experience, and how the things of the world are *interrelated* to each other. This sounds like a more suitable approach to the Buddha’s teaching, doesn’t it?

Nevertheless one might wonder: are these philosophical ideas really necessary in order to understand the teaching?

No, they aren’t. If we could approach the Dhamma in a wholly unbiased way, then we would be able to take the middle way without them. We could try to gain understanding directly from the phenomena, from our *relationship* to them – in other words, from our own experience.

A completely unprejudiced contemporary master who certainly has not read Heidegger, and has not been licked by Buddhist scholasticism either, puts it this way:

When we now contemplate under the aspect of wisdom, it does not take place far from the heart. We return into our heart. When we reach out for an object of contemplation we return into the heart with it.

“Bringing back” or “returning” are verbal expressions that describe a process: we return with our sensing from the distance. We return to the knowing quality, we return and dwell with the heart.¹⁸

Dhammarato Bhikkhu (Luang Phō Bunmī)

If we were able to bring the things of our world back into the heart, we would stop looking at them and interpreting them through the filter of learned concepts or logical conclusions. Unfortunately we have cut our teeth, so to speak, on the belief in objectivity, the scientific view of the world. We imbibed it with our education. Or maybe as a counter reaction to the materialism which comes along with it, we took on idealistic views in the guise of spirituality.

Both extremes create an inner climate that makes it impossible to understand what the Buddha taught. They do not allow us to be *transformed* by this teaching. If we are not ready to *change* ourselves by practising the Buddha's Dhamma, then things will stay as they are. Then we simply go on suffering. The choice is ours.

A certain amount of knowledge of phenomenological principles can help us become aware of our conditioning. Only then can we – at least as far as Dhamma practice is concerned – start setting it aside.

Now, one of these phenomenological principles is stated as follows:

Of that which *is called the world in the Noble One's discipline*, we can see only one part directly. This part is called “external domains” in the language of the Buddha, and consists of visible forms, sounds, odours, flavours, tangibles and things. The “inner domains” – the eye (ear, nose, tongue, body and mind) can only be seen with the aid of a mirror. This mirror is reflexion or self-contemplation, or, in the language of the Buddha: mindfulness and full awareness.

The limits of philosophy

So, we observe the world directly, in an immediate way, and we reflect ourselves and our observation of the world in the mirror of reflexion. If that was all, if that were enough for us to realise liberation from all suffering, then no Buddha would be necessary to guide us there. Good philosophy alone would be sufficient.

But as we shall later see, it is crucial that we understand the observer's nature – or mode of existence – in a deeper way. We must learn to see relationships that go *against the grain* of our present self-observation. We are required to probe into the inside of the looking glass!

“That sounds like Alice in Wonderland. These's no way that will work!”

That's right. The laws of the hall of mirrors indeed do not allow us a way out into freedom. All philosophers, even the best ones, can't help but to follow these laws. There is a certain line they cannot cross.

So is the subjective approach maybe at fault? After all, we have heard that the ego is the root of all problems, and that this ego should be done away with as quickly as possible.

Here, sister, a bhikkhu hears: “Apparently the bhikkhu named so-and-so, through the destruction of the *drives**, having realised here&now the drive-free heart-liberation, the liberation by wisdom, with higher knowledge for himself, having entered it, he dwells in it.” He thinks: “That venerable one, [if he made it] – why, so can I!” Then at a later time, by means of conceit, he abandons conceit. [...] “Sister, through conceit this body has come to be; by means of conceit, conceit is to be abandoned.”¹⁹

Subjectivity is not the *cause* of the problem, but rather an *aspect* of it, a symptom. But it is not overcome by ignoring it or by searching for some higher transcendent subjectivity. We must begin from where we are; we must look at and tackle the problem from right here: conceit is to be abandoned by means of conceit. Subjectivity is the most general form of conceit – the conceit “I am”.

No, the failure of the philosophers is not due to their different methods. They fail because *every* method just leads one around in circles. The middle approach requires something that philosophy, or thinking in general cannot provide.

What the philosophers lack, and how the Buddha managed to escape the dilemma – this we will keep for later.



What was lacking for Søren Kierkegaard?

The Discourse – *Breathing in and out*

And how, bhikkhus, does a bhikkhu abide with the body body-contemplating? Here a bhikkhu, gone to the forest or to the root of a tree or to an empty hut, sits down; having folded his legs into a *throne posture**, set the body erect, and established *mindfulness** *all around ready-to-use**. Ever mindful he breathes in, ever mindful he breathes out. Breathing in long, he understands: ‘I breathe in long’; or breathing out long, he understands: ‘I breathe out long.’ Breathing in short, he understands: ‘I breathe in short’; or breathing out short, he understands: ‘I breathe out short.’ He trains thus: ‘I shall breathe in *experiencing** the whole body’; he trains thus: ‘I shall breathe out experiencing the whole body.’ He trains thus: ‘I shall breathe in calming body-*determination**’; he trains thus: ‘I shall breathe out calming body-determination’.

Just as a skilled lathe-operator or his apprentice, when making a long turn, understands: ‘I make a long turn’; or, when making a short turn, understands: ‘I make a short turn’; so too, breathing in long, a bhikkhu understands: ‘I breathe in long’; or breathing out long, he understands: ‘I breathe out long.’ Breathing in short, he understands: ‘I breathe in short’; or breathing out short, he understands: ‘I breathe out short.’ He trains thus: ‘I shall breathe in experiencing the whole body’; he trains thus: ‘I shall breathe out experiencing the whole body.’ He trains thus: ‘I shall breathe in calming body-determination’; he trains thus: ‘I shall breathe out calming body-determination’.

2. The Practice is a Hologram

So, now we can get started with the practice. Let's see ... first we'll try mindfulness of the breathing.

"Wait a minute!", a professional Buddhologist interrupts. "We don't actually know if this text here *really* is the teaching of a man who Buddhists believe to be awakened, a Buddha. After all, our research has shown evidence that *this* text here differs from the Chinese translation of a Sanskrit translation of another text on satipaṭṭhāna, in which mindfulness of the breathing is not listed at the beginning, but rather later on in the text. And the analysis of text fragments on tree bark that were discovered in a desert region of Central Asia, is still at an early stage. And these are surely the key to the paradigm of the ultimate cross reference, the essence of all historical perspectives, without which we can not really know what satipaṭṭhāna is."²⁰

A spiritual expert down to his core shakes his head at all of this. He knows that holy scriptures are but conventions, that suffering is only imaginary, and consequently the wish to practise is just an illusion. And besides, in emptiness there is no satipaṭṭhāna anyway.^e

This doesn't faze us. We are convinced that we cannot overcome the personal problem of suffering by engaging in studies, and that the world is as real as it plainly is. On top of that we trust the Buddha and his teaching – yes, even if just as an advance. But we know that there is only one way to find out whether this teaching delivers on its promise, and that is to try it out! So we simply go ahead and make a start.

e Cp. Prajñāpāramitā Hṛdayasūtra: "In emptiness there is no suffering: neither its origin nor its end and no path to liberation from suffering."

How much effort is needed?

Right from the start we hear that a stepping back from the hustle and bustle of everyday life is required. We are told to take up a stable, but at the same time comfortable meditation posture, with the body erect – all of this information can be found in any meditation manual. It is a so-called formal practice.

But nowadays there is a widespread view that it doesn't really require so much effort; that one can train in satipaṭṭhāna in normal everyday life if one is simply quite mindful of "everything".

It is certainly correct that mindfulness of all our activities is a good thing. It helps us to prevent mistakes, and it serves as a good *preparation* for satipaṭṭhāna: *mindfulness established all around ready-to-use* – the state necessary for us to even *begin*.

Normally it is not feasible for most people to enter a forest in order to meditate. But seclusion can also mean to keep a distance from the internet and mobile phones. Satipaṭṭhāna is not the exclusive privilege of monks, but neither is it something we do en passant.

An elephant trainer by the name of Pessa once said to the Buddha:

For, venerable sir, we white-clothed lay people also from time to time abide with our hearts well established in these four satipaṭṭhānā.²¹

M51

The elephant trainer certainly has to be very mindful in his job – and he alludes to this in the discourse. He does, however, tell the Buddha that lay people do practise satipaṭṭhāna *from time to time*, namely, when they are wearing white. White clothed, being the traditional dress worn for keeping the observances of the *uposatha day** and possibly even for visiting a monastery to do meditation. Well ... it very much looks like satipaṭṭhāna requires a special type of mindfulness.

So what is mindfulness actually?

The usual answer which for most meditators immediately comes to mind is: “Being in the present moment, fully in the here&now.” And that’s correct.

But originally and in its most general sense, the Pāli word *sati* means “remembering”. This seems like a contradiction. Remembering – doesn’t that mean indulging in the past?

A *noble-disciple** is mindful, equipped with highest mindfulness and diligence, one who remembers and recollects what was done and said long ago. With mindfulness as his gatekeeper, the noble-disciple abandons the unwholesome and develops the wholesome.²²

A 7.67

Aha, so apparently it is not a contradiction: both aspects are mentioned next to each other here. Remembering can be mindfulness if we are aware *now* that we are thinking about the past. And mindfulness can prevent us *now* from doing something stupid. “Now is the knowing,” is something the contemporary master Venerable Samedho has been known to say now and then.

And I say: knowing is also *here*, linked back to the heart. This is exactly what re-mem-bering or intro-spection means: being clear about the entire process of observation including its contents.

We can take the past, the present and even the future – for example, the inevitability of our own death – and *present* it: we make it present, and we present it to our own awareness. Whatever it is that we feel, think, experience – it is important that we are clear about it. That’s why mindfulness is often mentioned in the suttas in connection with another quality: *full awareness**. Now this goes beyond mere mindfulness, it comprehends context, motivation, purpose, direction and so on: knowing what it is all about – what we are doing, or what is happening to us. Snipers for example are very mindful “at work” for sure, but “they do *not know* what they are doing”.

For satipaṭṭhāna, however, we do have to know it, and we have to know that our actions have consequences. And being clear about this really is an integral part of the straight view referred to in the quote on page 19. If we don't care what the consequences of our actions are – and here our mental re-actions to our inner and outer life are also included – then we will not be able to attain the *appropriate method* referred to in the introduction of the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta. A kind of “mindfulness” that merely watches in an uninvolved way as demanded by some authors, just leaves everything as it is. We, however, want to purify ourselves, want to overcome *sorrow&lamentation*, want to make *pain&grief* disappear ... and we want to realise *Nibbāna*!

The principle of breath awareness

In our sutta, mindfulness of the breathing is described in four *steps* or *stages* or *levels*. Firstly, it becomes clear to us that we breathe in *long* and out *long*. Later, on the second level, we breathe in *short* and out *short*, and again understanding that it is so.

This is not a breathing exercise as in Hatha-Yoga, in which we intentionally change the breathing. But the breathing doesn't become shorter – i.e. softer or more gentle – without a cause either; it passes from a coarse to a subtle state *because* we are watching it continuously. That too, becomes clear to us, and we can observe this *connection*.

A commentary from the Buddhist Middle Ages purports that “long” and “short” refer to the wavelength of the breath, i.e. that at first the breath is slow, and then it accelerates. This explanation contradicts our *direct, immediate* observation. The phenomenon of the breath tells us that meditation practice, and Dhamma practice in general, always proceed from the coarse to the subtle. The simile of the lathe-operator (turner) illustrates this: the workpiece on the lathe rotates at a constant speed. First the coarse contours are lathed out, and then the fine details.

At this point in the sutta, the description of how the exercise progresses, changes. From now on it is expressed in the future tense: “I *shall* breathe in and out so-and-so.” The way or mode in which we experience the breath changes because we apply *mindfulness all around ready-to-use* and we *train!* We train, and then it *will* be so-and-so without us willing it into existence. We cannot force it into existence. This is something that will dawn upon every meditator ... maybe not in a heart-beat, but within not too many in and out breaths.

If we stay with the breath long enough without distraction, if we have trained long enough, we will notice that the coarse sensations in the body recede more and more into the background, and subtle, gentle vibrations take their place; they change, moving to the rhythm of the breath. At this point, we understand that the sensing of the breath not only takes place where the actual flow of air is happening – nose, throat, chest, abdomen. The breath can be experienced as a subtle sensation of movement – in Buddhist parlance: as a manifestation of the wind element – in the *whole body*. Or the other way round: the whole body can be experienced *as breath*.

I call this a certain body among bodies, namely, the in-
&out-breaths.²³

M 118

Maybe the reader has heard about the dispute between the “experts”, as to whether *body* is referring here to the body, or to the breath. Should the whole body be observed “while breathing” or the whole “breath-body”? This contention is pointless – both positions describe one and the same phenomenon, one and the same *experience*. It all depends on the state of the observer, as to how the things in his world present themselves to him. This is an understanding that has been gained in phenomenology, and that we can now confirm through our own examination, provided we deal with phenomena directly, and not with concepts that we have learned about the particular phenomenon.

And while we are happily and mindfully breathing away like this, it may come to us: that body = breath *is a thing in the observed world!*

And on level four, yet another insight dawns on us, namely:

As long as we continue breathing and training, we are *calming body-determination*.

But what, lady, is body-determination ...?

– The in-&out-breaths, friend Visākha, are body-determination ...

– But why, lady, are the in-&out-breaths body-determination ...?

– The in-&out-breaths, friend Visākha, are bodily, these things are bound up with the body; that is why the in-&out-breaths are body-determination.²⁴

M 44

All right, so the breath is calmed at this stage of training. But why does the Buddha make it so complicated by not simply saying: “I shall breathe in&out calming the breath”? Or, if the breath and the body are the same at this point, he could also say: “I shall breathe in&out calming the body.”

A determination is a phenomenon or a thing that determines, conditions, shapes something else, another thing. The Buddha thus points out that the breath is not just simply a thing in our world, but rather it is a thing that determines other things. In this case the body. The breath is a body-determination.

Normally we take it for granted that *we* are the determiners (or even “de-terminators”?). After all *we* are the ones that breathe, aren’t we? We are the *doers*. And now, all of a sudden, the breath is supposed to be the active part?

All right, the breath breathes and thus determines the body. If we did not have the breath, we’d be dead. This is something that’s quite easy for us to grasp. And also, that even though without the breath the

body would somehow still be there – as a corpse – this would be of no real help because *we* would not be around any more to assess it. This too, we can accept. After all it is all about the *experienced* body, the *experiencing* body, the body *alive*.

What might go against the grain for us, is that the body is being somewhat pushed to the passive sidelines. And it might go against the grain even more, that we – as the masters of the breath – are somehow bypassed.

Now, does the body breathe or does the breath embody? Which is the doer, the determiner? What do the phenomena tell us about this?

Nothing! At this stage we notice (if we are really practising on this level already) that we cannot “read” the answer from the phenomenon “breath”, but rather that it depends on the state of the reader, the observer. Once again! And we can read and recognise this state – *our* state – in the *way* or *mode* we experience the breath.

It is quite possible that by now we have started to get a faint inkling that determinations are strange creatures – sorry: phenomena – and that there is something hidden in their nature that cannot be fully uncovered with the tools of phenomenology. Well, we shall see ...

At this point, there may have been more questions raised than we can answer for now. We might be tempted to slide back and be content with some smooth and easy answers found in any old book on Buddhism. Congratulating ourselves for being so well up on sati-paṭṭhāna, and the case closed.

But we have already understood that this practice is something profound and that there is more to it, more to discover and understand. And so we prefer to keep these questions alive, not wishing to kill them off with premature answers.

The hologram principle

The four steps of mindfulness of the breathing (or breath awareness) do not simply describe four objects that exist parallel to each other, or even alternative ways of looking and observing. They represent *progressing* stages, shaped by an increasing understanding and inner clarity. The state of the observer changes, and not gradually, but rather in quantum leaps.

This progress on the four levels follows a certain *principle*, which can be expressed in the following way:

1. Noticing → 2. Investigating → 3. Understanding → 4. Transcending.

First we notice the coarse breath, then we observe, examine, investigate it, and while/by doing so it becomes finer, more subtle. We understand this refinement as a natural law: observation, breath, body – this is all interconnected. And then, with the fourth level, the breath is calmed.

“That’s all well and good, but where is the aspect of transcending?
And hasn’t the breath already been calmed on the second level?”

Transcending refers to two things: 1. the *object* of experience, i.e. the *experienced* thing, and 2. the *way* or *mode* of experiencing, i.e. the state of the *experiencer*.

The object is the breath. However, here we are not told, *how far* it is being calmed! It’s all about a principle: at the second stage of breath awareness it calms down a little. The coarseness is transcended. In deep states of concentration, the breathing can become so calm that the breath stops completely, not seemingly, but really. The breath is transcended.

Normally we see it like this: “It is *my* breath. *I* am the one who determines the breath.” Now we see that *the breath* is the determiner, not simply a thing, not just an object of observation. The claim to ownership has certainly not been overcome at this point yet, but perhaps at least to some extent it is questioned. The calming, the tran-

scending now takes on the primary role as the object of observation. The experiencer loses a little of his unquestioned “omnipotence”.

This principle – *noticing/becoming aware, investigating/examining, understanding/seeing through, transcending/overcoming* – pervades all of the Buddha’s teaching through different phrasings, in different contexts and on all levels. In the case of breath awareness or – one level higher – in the case of satipaṭṭhāna in general, it is especially easy to see it and illustrate it, but it is present everywhere: Dhamma has the nature of a hologram.

A hologram is a three-dimensional image. It is created by a *pattern* of mutual overlaying which extends across the *entire* medium. Thus every part of a hologram contains all the information of the object depicted, and one fraction of the hologram is enough to restore the whole object.

This nature of a hologram frequently comes to my mind when I contemplate the Buddhadhamma. Dhamma – or the practice of the Dhamma – cannot be put into a box, cannot be grasped and pigeon-holed: it has different levels mutually overlaying, and there are certain principles that reappear again and again on all levels and that are contained in every part. Another image to illustrate this is that of a jewel which has different facets, but all of these facets invariably give us access to a view into one and the same jewel. Or, in the words of the Buddha:

Pahārāda, just as the great ocean has but one taste, the taste of salt, so too, this Dhamma&discipline has but one taste, the taste of liberation.²⁵

A8. 19

Dhamma can only consist of Dhamma. The principles leading to liberation have to pervade every part and aspect of it; so this principle of pervading principles also applies to mindfulness of the breathing, or satipaṭṭhāna in general. Now it may have occurred to us that we are gradually getting in pretty deep here. And this is just the beginning!

The Discourse – *Threefold development, first way*

In this way he abides internally with the body body-contemplating, or he abides externally with the body body-contemplating, or he abides *internally&externally** with the body body-contemplating.

Or else contemplating as a thing of origin he abides with the body, or contemplating as a thing of passing-away he abides with the body, or contemplating as a thing of origin&passing-away he abides with the body.

Or else ‘there is a body’ mindfulness is present for him, just for the right measure of knowing and against-the-grain mindfulness. And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating.

3. Entering Satipaṭṭhāna

This passage is sometimes referred to as the insight refrain. They are, however, not insights that are being described here, but rather ways of experience, that is, what insight or understanding actually does to the mindful observer. It is not so much about *what* is observed, but *how* it is observed.

In the quote on page 19 the Buddha speaks of a threefold way of developing satipaṭṭhāna, or of three steps. And it is precisely these that are being described here. If we add the initial stage – the establishing of ready-to-use mindfulness – then we have four steps. And here again we meet with our hologram:

1. Noticing → 2. Investigating → 3. Understanding → 4. Transcending.

Now at this point it is possible that we cannot yet comprehend this fully, but we can keep the essence of this structure in mind; on standby so to speak.

The three ways of developing mentioned here, these three ways of experiencing, or modes of contemplation, differ significantly in their quality. They are a result of progress in the practice, and cannot simply be adopted at will, for instance like this: “Today I will abide contemplating *internally&externally*, tomorrow *contemplating as a thing of origin&passing-away*.” We must not imagine that at the beginning of the practice we have a *choice* here, even if this might be found in some books. If we believe that we have mastered something, but in fact we haven’t, then we hinder our own progress, because we see no reason for further striving and trying. We stop looking for a path.

In this chapter, my unscientific postscript will not yet disclose all three ways of developing. But that doesn’t matter, because we will meet with this text again – twenty-two times in total – in the course of this discourse. So we can safely assume that this is a point which the Buddha emphasised, and that it amounts to the essence of satipaṭṭhāna.

What does satipaṭṭhāna mean?

We have examined the word *sati* on page 37 already. *Ṭhāna* (from the √thā, *stand*) means “*place* (of standing)” or “(place of) *standing*”, “*foundation*”, “*principle*”, or “*base*”. It indicates stability, the unmoving abiding of mindfulness – simply put: *sati-thāna* ...

“But wait a minute! It’s *sati-pa-ṭṭhāna*!”

Ah yes, that’s right. Well, the prefix *pa~* indicates a forward movement, not a standing still or non-moving, but rather something dynamic, something active, a changing of place. So *pa-ṭṭhāna* is not just a base, it’s a dynamic base for deploying or applying. *Satipaṭṭhāna* is therefore a place, or base, from which mindfulness is put to action, is applied. The four *satipaṭṭhānā* are *application-bases of mindfulness**.

Of course I could have tried to find a translation that rolls a bit more smoothly off the tongue. But it doesn’t hurt us to stumble over this unfamiliar word, as it is important to understand the dual nature of *satipaṭṭhāna*: it’s about stability (*stand-ability*), about a place onto which mindfulness can be anchored. Yet at the same time it’s about activity, and not in any way an uninvolved gaze. Using mindfulness as a tool, we *change* the way we observe. And, as we shall see, this also *applies* to the observer, who will also change in the process.

But before we investigate *how* we abide *with the body body-contemplating*, and in which way this can change, we first need to look into the question as to *what* it is that we are contemplating here, i.e. the question ...

What is body anyway?

This seems like an obvious question! Doesn’t everybody know, or at least have an idea, what the body is? Yet maybe the statement the Buddha made on page 39 has raised some doubts in us when he said that the breath is *a certain body** *among bodies*. Are there several?

In Pāli, there are several words for *body*. The two most important being *kāya* and *sarīra*. *Sarīra* refers to the body of flesh, the functional entity of organs. It denotes that which a biologist would understand by the term “body”; it doesn’t matter if there is life in this loaf of meat or not.²⁶ *Sarīra* means either *body* or *corpse*!

Kāya primarily means *group, heap, collection*, and only in its secondary usage does it mean *body*. Those two meanings, however, are not as disparate as they may at first glance seem. We know for example the term “corporate body”, which contains both meanings.

Kāya is a group, a collection of *diverse* components which has a *definite border* or outline.^f

Kāya is the *experienced* body, the totality of phenomena that we experience via the various sense faculties, including, as we shall see, the mind faculty. The quote on page 39 seems to indicate that the way *how* we experience the body does not remain static but is instead dependent on our inner state, on our *mode of experience*.

Kāya also represents the *experiencing* body! It is the place where all our senses are assembled. In a number of discourses, the Buddha speaks of the “body endowed with consciousness”, *saviññāṇaka kāya*. This experiencing body is our interface to the world, its centre. This centre of the world is the place where the experiencer abides. It is *here*. Always!

This sounds very much like phenomenological philosophy, but only because we are used to other ways of viewing experience. Neurophysiology for instance finds it deeply interesting to investigate at which exact point a material stimulus becomes a conscious “sensation”, or whether consciousness is a function of matter after all – for instance, of grey brain matter. These sorts of concepts have nothing to do with the experienced body, and are completely irrelevant to the practice of satipaṭṭhāna.

^f Later we will come across another type of group, or heap, which consists of *homogenous* components, but does not display a definite limit or boundary – in Pāli: *khandha*.

Or maybe, on the other hand, we find it outrageous that this base, worldly, filthy material body should be able to feel or experience something: “The body doesn’t feel anything you know. It’s only the mind that feels!”

This is an idealist position which only found its way into “Buddhism” during the last two centuries, possibly as a reaction to the triumph of science. This kind of value judgement that fundamentally separates body and mind is not something found in the Buddha’s teaching. Body and mind are a functional unity.

So let’s summarise: it is all about the body as it manifests in experience. It is that which makes experience possible, and that which is dependent on the mode of experience, i.e. *how* it experiences and is experienced.

Internally and externally

And how is the body experienced? One abides with the body body-contemplating, internally, externally or internally&externally. This mode of experience marks the first step forward in the practice of satipaṭṭhāna, and this is in no way a trifling matter. Here we are not merely establishing ready-to-use mindfulness; we are beginning to apply it.

Bhikkhus, without having abandoned six things, one is incapable to abide internally ... externally ... internally&externally with the body body-contemplating. What six? Indulgence in business, indulgence in useless talk, indulgence in sleep, indulgence in company, not guarding the door at the sense faculties, and immoderateness in eating.²⁷

A6.118

Now let’s try a little meditative exercise that may help us to understand what this means in practice.

We prepare ourselves for meditation as described on page 34. We take note of the breath wherever it works well for us. And then we mindfully breathe in and out for a while.

When the breath has become a bit calmer we change the focus of our attention. We contemplate our buttocks, feel the buttocks, try to fully experience this sensation.

When we have established a clear sense of the experience “buttocks”, we change the focus again. Now we feel the sitting place. We touch it and feel it with the buttocks, we feel the cushion, the mat, the bench, the chair. How does it feel?

We notice that the experience “buttocks” and the experience “sitting place” both consist of exactly the same sensations, it is only the “direction” that is somehow different!

Now we establish our attention in the tongue. We are fully in the tongue. The tongue is in some kind of cave. We touch and feel with the tongue, we feel the cave ceiling, the palate.

We change the focus one more time and are just the mouth. We have something in the mouth: a worm-like thing. We touch and feel the tongue with the mouth.

We end this exercise and continue reading (and breathing).

The passage in the discourse on “internally and externally” has puzzled many adepts and expositors of satipaṭṭhāna, has posed a riddle to them. Most often they try to solve this by saying that “internally” refers to one’s own body, and “externally” to the bodies of other people. The understanding derived through contemplating the bodies of others is to be applied to one’s own body by inference.

We have, however, already excluded inference as a means for gaining cognizance on page 23. Trying to understand the body by drawing logical conclusions about others is certainly not what the Buddha had meant by “abiding with the body body-contemplating”. Just how untenable this idea of inferring is, becomes even clearer when we consider the other application-bases of mindfulness, especially feeling and heart. For it is not a requirement that we develop supernatural powers to explore the inner world of others in order to successfully practise satipaṭṭhāna.

What if we were to understand “internally and externally” in the way it is being used in by far the most cases in the suttas? Here it refers to the internal and external sense domains (or sense bases). “Internal” being the senses, and “external” being the sense objects. By taking the body as an example, this idea can be very easily understood: the body is the organ of the sense of touch internally, as well as its object of touch ... externally. It just depends on the “direction”, as we explored in that little meditation exercise just one page ago.

When we contemplate the whole body externally as an object of touch, when we see it “from the outside”, we indeed get the impression that we are standing “beside” ourselves. So for now, we can say: “internally” we contemplate the body as the toucher, as being here, as something personal, as the subject; “externally” we contemplate the body as the touched, as being over there, as something alien, as the object. The Pāli words *ajjhataṃ* and *bahiddhā* actually do incorporate this broad meaning.²⁸

As the practice progresses, the terms *subject* and *object* lose their meaning, and then only *internally* and *externally* remain. But let’s not get too far ahead of ourselves at this stage.

We can play around a little with this change of direction, and will soon discover that there is a natural tendency – some kind of inertia – towards contemplating the body internally. Contemplating externally is strenuous and difficult – that’s the reason for the prerequisites mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. They are necessary even at this early stage of the satipaṭṭhāna practice. Separation between these two aspects is not always 100 % successful; sometimes it is more like an emphasis. But there are cases when the external view seemingly arises on its own, and in quite a dramatic way.^g Those affected usually don’t know what is happening, maybe speaking of an “out-of-body experience” or a transpersonal something.

Corpse finger

In order to understand *internally&externally* we can try another experiment, and play around a bit with the viewpoint of the observer. This exercise requires two people; and we have to find a “phenomenal” partner for this.

Each partner “provides” one hand. The one sitting on the left, gives the left hand, and the one sitting on the right, gives the right hand. Both hands are placed together palm to palm. Using the thumb and the index finger of their free hand, the two phenomenologists take it in turns to stroke the index fingers of the two hands held together.

It makes no sense here to try to describe this experience, just give it a go!

The game is called “corpse finger”. The creepy effect is caused because we expect our fingers to be both an organ of touch *and* the object of touch at the same time. But our partner’s index finger is only external.

^g Kammic fruit from causes in previous lives? Most people cannot prove this phenomenologically for themselves; therefore it is not relevant to our observations here. But speculating is fun – another important aspect of self-awareness!

We used to play this at school for fun and our amusement, but it is a “deadly” serious matter. It shows us how we deal with our experience, how we classify it into “I” and “mine”.



“Corpse finger” is not a game for kids!

The first stage of this practice, entering satipaṭṭhāna, demonstrates to us that the unquestioning assumption of a particular viewpoint is actually an arbitrary matter. That the place where we “take our seat”, the place we identify with, is nothing solid. And nor is it an inherent quality of the things in our world. Our place is in our *relationship* to them, how we treat them and deal with them.

To make this start is difficult. Contemplating the body internally and externally feels odd for many people. That’s partly due to the high hurdle that the aforementioned necessary prerequisites represent. After all, we *do* like to indulge in useless things, not least our indiscriminate media consumption. We *do* like to be absorbed in worldly things. And most of us are terribly fond of eating and sleeping.

On top of that, this approach is in a manner of speaking, radically phenomenological. This was nothing unusual for the monks at the time of the Buddha, even though other kinds of spiritual teachings were also in circulation.

But nowadays we live in a world of facts. There is no place in it for such games.

The Discourse – *Threefold development, second way*

Again, bhikkhus, when walking, a bhikkhu understands: ‘I walk’; when standing, he understands: ‘I stand’; when sitting, he understands: ‘I sit’; when lying down, he understands: ‘I lie down’; or however his body is disposed, in that way he understands it.

In this way he abides internally with the body body-contemplating, or he abides externally with the body body-contemplating, or he abides internally&externally with the body body-contemplating.

Or else contemplating as a thing of origin he abides with the body, or contemplating as a thing of passing-away he abides with the body, or contemplating as a *thing of origin&passing-away** he abides with the body.

Or else ‘there is a body’ mindfulness is present for him, just for the right measure of knowing and against-the-grain mindfulness. And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This too, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating.

4. Development of Satipaṭṭhāna

The second example from the discourse tells us that to abide body-contemplating internally and/or externally is not limited to just the breath-body; we can also watch the body walking, sitting, standing, or lying down. This is less formal than contemplating the breath, and for most of us, it will be even more difficult to maintain the respective mode of contemplating. Considering the pretty arduous task placed on the application-base of mindfulness, we may wonder what all of this is good for:

Why then do we contemplate the body internally and externally and both together? What is the purpose of such an exercise at this initial stage?

Bhikkhus, those new bhikkhus who are not long gone forth, recently come to this Dhamma&discipline, should be brought by you to develop the four application-bases of mindfulness, should be made to settle and find support there: “Come, friends, abide with the body body-contemplating ... with feelings feeling-contemplating ... with the heart heart-contemplating ... with things thing-contemplating, ardent, fully aware, unified, with an inspired heart, concentrated, with a one-peaked heart, *for knowledge according to reality* of the body ... of feelings ... of the heart ... of things.”²⁹

S47.4

So, what does it mean to know the body according to reality?

Every time we jump from “internally” to “externally” we are arranging the world and our place in it anew; in a busy everyday life we simply don’t notice this. But in the first stage of satipaṭṭhāna we realise that this changing of standpoint is completely arbitrary.

With progress in the practice, i.e. if proper wisdom – a certain amount of this *knowledge according to reality* – is already present, we may *possibly* notice that we can contemplate the body alternately as being an inner sense domain or an outer sense domain; as the touch

sense or as the object being touched. But at the same time the body is always seen as the *owner* or the *object owned*.

We identify with the body in one of two ways: “The body, that’s me. I am the body.” Or: “The body is mine – I am the owner of the body.” For example we could say: “*I* am blonde.” Or: “*My hair* is blonde.”

When we try to observe the body “objectively”, then just by doing so we turn ourselves into the observing “subject” at the same time, somehow outside the body. We just can’t help it! Subjectivity is always involved, as if there was some kind of compulsion behind all of this: the body is either me or mine.

The monks at the time of the Buddha had also noticed this very phenomenon, but they had had the good fortune of being able to ask the Blessed One for a way out of this compulsion (to our advantage):

Venerable sir, how does one know, how does one see, so that in regard to this body endowed with consciousness and in regard to all external signs, there is for him no more urge to *I-making-mine-making** and conceit?³⁰

M 109

The answer to this question as given in the suttas, is by its nature always the same, but different objects of contemplation are used. We will get to know all of these objects throughout this book. Since we are now in the process of working on the first application-base of mindfulness – the body – the Venerable Channa’s approach to this fits especially well:

Friend Sāriputta, I regard the body, body-consciousness, and things cognisable through body-consciousness thus: “This is not mine, this one I am not, this one is not my self.”³¹

M 144

This mode of viewing is described in many discourses as being the trigger for both disenchantment and letting go; as a first step towards liberation from suffering. So what is it exactly that leads us to a state

in which we can regard cognisable things in this way and thus trigger disenchantment?

Bhikkhus, these four application-bases of mindfulness, when *developed* and cultivated, lead invariably to disenchantment, to *dispassion*^{*}, to cessation, to peace, to higher knowledge, to awakening, to Nibbāna.³²

S 47. 32

With this we have reached the second stage, and now we can set out to *develop* satipaṭṭhāna. – “Oh, so have we not been doing it up to now?” – No, not really.

Recognising the urge

Gradually, after we have been practising “internally and externally” for long enough, it becomes clear that there is an ingredient in the experience of the body that has nothing to do with the body itself: it is this compulsion to view the body as *either* I or as mine. And that “*neither/nor*” is not possible. Something is wrong here!

Normally we take this tendency for granted. Identifying with the body, or with the owner of the body, or with anything else for that matter, is called *taking-up*^{*} in the Buddha’s teaching. This taking-up, is the condition for us being suffering beings, for our existence, for our Dasein. And this in turn has a condition – the *craving*^{*} to be there. This craving is the origin of suffering, its original condition.

Now this is the noble truth of the origin of suffering:

It is this craving that brings further *being*^{*}, is accompanied by delectation&passion and delights here and there – that is, craving for wishing, craving for being, craving for potential being.³³

S 56. 11

We, however, do not see it that way (yet). The notion that our wanting to be should take the blame for our suffering, goes against the

grain of our experience, of our phenomenological observation. In order to be able to practise the second stage of satipaṭṭhāna, its *actual development*, we have to fundamentally change our view.

Philosophy hits a wall

This is the point where phenomenology pulls out. To gain cognizance that cannot be gleaned from the phenomena directly, not even from their relationship to the observer – in the mirror of self-awareness – well, this is impossible according to the phenomenological system. The cause for the compulsion, the drive to self-identification cannot be discovered. The rules of the game in this world and our existence therein do not allow this.

If I did not have an animated-body, if my animated-body, my empirical I was not given to me, I could not “see” another animated-body, another human being. Another’s animated-body I can only apprehend through the interpretation of a body that is similar to mine, as an animated-body, and thus as the bearer of an I (one similar to mine).³⁴

Edmund Husserl

In his unquestioned identification with the body as being the “bearer of an I”, the phenomenologist Husserl has reached his limit. He is unable to see that this identification can not be justified. In the Buddha’s teaching, this inability to see is called “ignorance”, it is a fundamentally wrong view of the structure of our suffering existence. This wrong view is both the *cause* for this structure of suffering existence and at the same time a *part* of it. This means that because of our ignorance we do not know that this ignorance – together with the structure that is dependent on it – actually exists. Suffering is not an odd coincidence!

We are ignorant because we don’t see it that way, and we don’t see it that way because we are ignorant. It’s a catch-22, no-win situation. And we do not even know that we are in it, let alone how we are to

get out of it. All of our attempts at this, are like trying to free the “meeples” – the little board game pieces used for playing “Ludo” – from the prison of their board, by rolling the dice in a particularly skilful way. Gaining cognizance from the inside of the looking glass, as mentioned above, requires a view that is not subject to the laws governing the hall of mirrors.

For Husserl, the body as the bearer of the senses (the “animated-body”) was the empirical I, unprovable, but nevertheless existent, and “given to him”. For Husserl the case was closed.

When we look at childhood photos, we say, “That I *was*.” When we look into the mirror, we think to ourselves, “This I *am*.” It is easy to see that “our” body in the photo has almost nothing in common with the body reflected in the mirror. But it would never occur to us that the “I”, which I was in the photo, and the “I”, which I now see in the mirror, are different “I’s”: “I am always me. But *what* am I?”

Some of the best philosophers saw this compulsion towards identification, and they tried in vain to explain it. Martin Heidegger called it “care”:

Care already harbours in itself the phenomenon of the Self. [...] “I” ... is not an attribute of other Things; it is not itself a predicate, but the absolute “subject”.³⁵

Martin Heidegger

Heidegger sees that “to be an I or Self” is a phenomenon fraught with suffering. But that there is no way out in sight; it is as it is. The I/subject is absolute, i.e independent of conditions, and always “the same persisting something” – eternal.

For Jean-Paul Sartre the I – he calls it “for-itself” – is rooted in the nature of the hall of mirrors, in the interplay between the reflecting one and the reflected – our internal&external. And that that which is reflected can be the actual reflecting one him- or herself: that is, self-awareness. He too sees the aspect of suffering, but he too has to deal with “I am always me (or, the same I).”

The one who is reflecting on me is ... myself who am enduring engaged in the circuit of my selfness, in danger in the world, with my historicity. This historicity and this being-in-the-world and this circuit of selfness – these the for-itself which I am lives in the mode of the reflexive re-duplication^h (*dédoublement réflexif*).³⁶

Jean-Paul Sartre

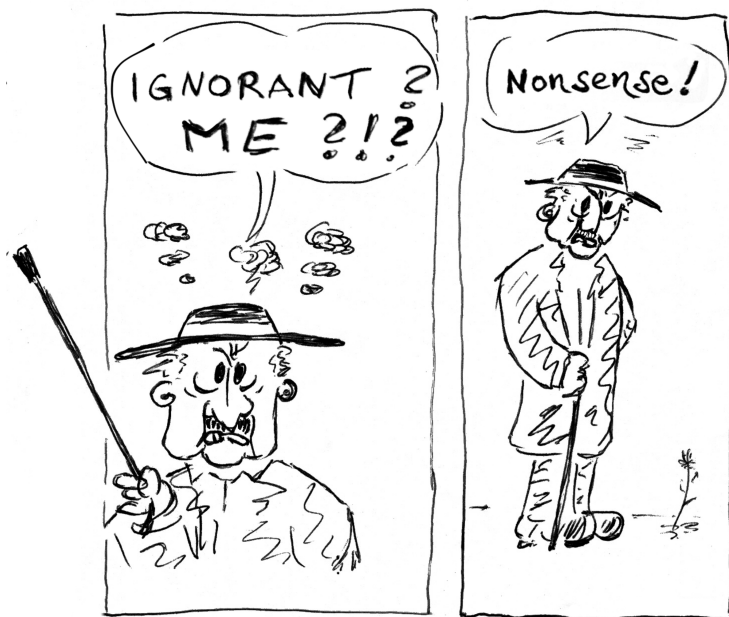
Could other philosophical systems, like those that were introduced earlier, offer us some help here? What would a proponent of logical positivism say?

According to the laws of logic the undisputable fact “I am” is the most general contradictory statement possible: “I” is the subject, “am” points to an object. So, if I am anything at all, then an object. But then I am no longer the subject, then I am no longer I. And yet, I still don’t know who or what I am. That too is an undisputable fact.

For a logician or a realist, the solution to this dilemma lies in simply ignoring their own existence, or to be “proud to abandon existence”, as Kierkegaard ironically commented on page 16.

The attempts to find a solution as proposed by idealist philosophers are manifold. In most cases they point to some transcendent sphere as an answer to the question of existence, or to a Higher Reality, or to a Higher Self or to whatever. These noumenal delicacies are, by their very nature, not accessible to one’s own experience, at least as far as our humdrum ordinary reality is concerned. Unfortunately, by this pointing to the “elsewhere”, the Buddha’s teaching no longer applies, because it sets out to find a solution in that exact place where the problem lies – in the very normal being of a suffering human being, in the “danger in the world”.

h I have modified this translation a bit. In the original translation (see “Postscript/Sources”), the translator chose to understand and translate *dédoublement réflexif* as “reflective dissociation”. What *reflexive re-duplication* means will be discussed later.



Why Martin Heidegger could not find an answer

Phenomenologists or existential philosophers, likewise know that existence is a contradiction in terms, because any answer to the questions of being – “I am ... but what” and “Why am I? What is the meaning of my existence?” – is untenable. These philosophers know that an “enduring” I contradicts its own “historicity” and cannot be justified by it. They do understand that the question of existence persists, that it presses for an answer, and that they cannot find one, even if they wiggle around the topic with great verbosity.³⁷

Dhamma is not philosophy

“My goodness, is it really necessary to give ourselves such a headache over all of this? Haven’t we got enough problems already?”

Every unawakened being suffers, irrespective of whether they are interested in phenomenology or not. The question as to our place in the world – “Who or what am I? What is this all about?” – is always pressing, even if it is not explicitly asked or formulated in words.

“I am” is after all not only a philosophical contradiction, not only a logical or linguistic problem, it can truly be experienced as a lack or a gap. And we are always busy trying to fill the gap with all kinds of trappings, in order to justify our role, our place in the universe, our identity. But we never succeed in justifying it, because our existence, our identity is regarded as permanent, unmoving and independent, whereas all our “equipment” is so terribly impermanent: family, friends, houses, cars, views and ideas, self-images, thoughts, feelings, perceptions – everything changes, breaks down, disappears, becomes uninteresting. We constantly have to patch, improve, touch up and repair, to get something and to avoid something. And that is precisely suffering.

So what kind of answer can the Buddha offer us? Is he the better philosopher?

The Buddha shows the way to the end of suffering, but not by giving us the ultimate answer to the question of existence. Instead he guides us to see through the question and to expose it as being invalid. We have to understand that the “I” is nothing absolute at all; it is dependent on conditions. This, however, goes against the grain for us because we are *not able* to see ourselves in that way.

For this generation, which indulges in attachment, enjoys attachment, rejoices in attachment, it is hard to see this principle, namely, the *special conditionality, dependent co-arising**.³⁸

M26

And, what is so special about this conditionality that is so hard to see? Exactly this!

Conditionality means that when there is a condition, then there is at the same time the conditioned. An example: the light of the sun conditions the growth of trees, and from their cellulose paper can be produced. This is ordinary conditionality; it is easy to see. Another contemporary master, Thich Nhat Hanh, posed the question: “Can you see the sun in this sheet of paper?” Yes, I can!

This special, extraordinary conditionality states: “I exist because I take up things. This taking-up makes me what I am. I take up because I *want* to exist. And yet I can’t see all this. And because I can’t see all this, it is like this. This is the origin of all suffering.”

Yes, this principle is indeed hard to see. Any attempt to understand it with the tools of logic will only bring on a headache. “Can you see ignorance in your headache?” No, I can’t!

Seeing the origin of suffering

“Well then, there’s no hope! It’s a catch-22 situation! How can we even try to look into the inside of the looking glass, when this inside is hidden behind all the reflections? How can we meeples ever even dream of leaving the board of our ludo-crous game?”

This can only happen if someone knocks the board over. And it has to be someone whose actions and vision are not constrained by the rules of the game, someone who is already outside the board. The Buddha has left the board, his teaching abolishes the rules of the game, his disciples are knocking their boards over.

That’s why *faith* and *confidence* are indispensable ingredients for a successful practice of satipaṭṭhāna. Knowledge in line with the reality of the body and the other application-bases, which is to be acquired in the initial stage, can only take hold when it links up with something that lies beyond its present horizon.

Then it will slowly dawn upon us that the teaching on this special conditionality does indeed go against the grain of our present mode of experience, but we have no other alternative. What else could the way out of suffering be, if not this teaching? At least we can accept this now.

When the conditions ripen the view “turns” or “flips over”. “This is mine, I am the owner of this. I, being the owner, make this mine,” becomes, “wanting to own makes the owner.” The Lord of the Things realises that in reality he is their slave.

When we have contemplated “inside and out” for long enough, it may be that the connection becomes clear: we *make* “internal” to be the “owner”, we *make* “external” to be the “owned”, because we *want* it that way. Because we want to *be there*. The body is subject to the law of wanting-to-be-there. The experience of the body as I or mine is conditioned by taking-up, which in turn is conditioned by craving for being. The body is a *thing of the origin* of suffering.

When this truly comes to light the world shakes, quakes and trembles. This change of view, of the direction of vision, becomes the door for entry into Dhamma, into dealing with the special conditionality, dependent co-arising.

And what, bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the origin of suffering? Ignorance-conditioned is determinations ... craving-conditioned is taking-up, taking-up-conditioned is being ... Such is the origin of this whole heap of suffering. This is called the noble truth of the origin of suffering.³⁹

A 3.63

The acquisition of knowledge in accordance with reality has prepared the soil. Now the actual practice of satipaṭṭhāna begins, the actual practice of the path to the end of all suffering – the noble eightfold path.

High school

Only someone who has entered the stream of Dhamma, who has attained right view, is called “one in higher training”. Can we not practise before this? We can, but it is a practice in *preparation* for the actual path; right view is not yet active at this stage. Right view is the guiding force that turns mindfulness into a path factor – right satipaṭṭhāna so to speak. Not until this stage of higher training does right view develop a new level of knowledge:

Bhikkhus, those bhikkhus who are in *higher training**, who abide with a mind that has not yet attained the goal, still aspiring to the unsurpassed security from bondage: They too abide with the body body-contemplating ... with feelings feeling-contemplating ... with the heart heart-contemplating ... with things thing-contemplating, ardent, fully aware, unified, with an inspired heart, concentrated, with a one-peaked heart, for the *complete penetrating knowledge** of the body ... of feelings ... of the heart ... of things.⁴⁰

S 47.4

Only at this stage of higher training, does the actual *development* of satipaṭṭhāna take place, for the *complete penetrating knowledge* of things, as an ingredient in the practice towards liberation from all suffering:

And what is the power of *development*? There, bhikkhus, the power of development is the power of those in higher training.⁴¹

A 2.11

And what, bhikkhus, is the *development* of satipaṭṭhāna? Here, bhikkhus, *contemplating as a thing of origin* a bhikkhu abides with the body, or contemplating as a thing of passing-away he abides with the body, or contemplating as a thing of origin&passing-away he abides with the body, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having removed greed&grief in regard to the world ... This is called the development of satipaṭṭhāna.

And what, bhikkhus, is the practice leading to the development of satipaṭṭhāna? It is just this noble eight-fold path; that is, right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right *concentration**.⁴²

S 47.40

Right view understands that all identification is based on craving for being, and is thus untenable. The sense of “I am”, the so-called “I am” conceit will however persist until full liberation has been realised, but it becomes progressively weaker in the course of the development of the path. Development takes place every time that practitioners in high school make an effort to apply their right view with mindfulness. The contradiction between right view and the conceit “I am” becomes more and more evident. This is the process towards complete penetration through knowledge.

Bhikkhus, a bhikkhu who is in higher training, with a mind that has not yet attained the goal, still aspiring to the unsurpassed security from bondage ... he should not conceive all as “mine”, he should not delight in all. Why is that? “It must be *completely penetratingly known* for him,” I say.⁴³

M 1

He should not, but he still does. However, the effort to bring right view increasingly into use goes against the grain of all conceit and delight.

He makes an effort to abandon wrong view and to enter upon right view. This is his right effort. Mindfully he abandons wrong view, mindfully he abides having entered upon right view. This is his right mindfulness. In this way these three things run around right view and bring it to use, that is, right view, right effort, and right mindfulness.⁴⁴

M 117

Passing away

The second aspect of the *development of satipaṭṭhāna* is to contemplate the body and everything else as a *thing of passing-away*. This contemplation has two objects:

1. The end of the *thing* itself (here: the experience of body): the thing or phenomenon ceases to be; this is its temporal ending.
2. The end of the *conditionality* of the thing: the phenomenon “body” is no longer conditioned by craving. It ceases to be a *thing of origin*. It is no longer subject to the compulsion towards identification.

By contemplating *temporality* or the temporal ending, we find an antidote to *taking-up* – but of course only if both *are seen*. For that which is impermanent is not suited to being an object of identification with a self, which is regarded as being permanent: “That *am I*.” (Contemplation of impermanence will be dealt with in much more detail later. Is that good news or bad? Well, someone who has persevered up to that point will probably welcome it.)

Passing-away undermines the state of being a thing of origin – of course, again only if one of the two, or both, are seen. When origin and passing-away (of the body or whatever) are compared, it becomes evident that origin is not the nature of *the thing*: craving, the origin, is an additional ingredient, which is unasked-for and now exposed.

In the course of higher training, contemplation of the *end of conditionality* becomes increasingly predominant. Contemplation of temporality becomes more and more expendable.

Only those here who are able to understand this will be able to understand it. Unfortunately any “explanation”, no matter how brilliant it may be, will not change this. Cognizance is dependent on conditions. This book is meant to help those conditions along.

Now we’ll take a little break – best done on the meditation seat – before we get to the final sprint.

The Discourse -

Threefold development, third way

Again, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu is one who acts fully aware when going forward and returning; who acts fully aware when looking ahead and looking away; who acts fully aware when flexing and extending his limbs; who acts fully aware when donning the outer robe, bowl, and robes; who acts fully aware when eating, drinking, chewing, and tasting; who acts fully aware when defecating and urinating; who acts fully aware when walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking up, talking, and keeping silent.

In this way he abides internally with the body body-contemplating, or he abides externally with the body body-contemplating, or he abides internally&externally with the body body-contemplating.

Or else contemplating as a thing of origin he abides with the body, or contemplating as a thing of passing-away he abides with the body, or contemplating as a thing of origin&passing-away he abides with the body.

Or else 'there is a body' mindfulness is present for him, just for the right measure of knowing and *against-the-grain mindfulness**. And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This too, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating.

5. The End of Satipaṭṭhāna

So, it is possible for us to practise satipaṭṭhāna in all our activities, right? Walking around, looking around, eating and drinking, chatting with friends, watching a movie ... as long as we are mindful!

No, it should not be understood in this way. The activities mentioned in our sutta are simple tasks that we perform on a daily basis. They don't require a lot of mindfulness in order to be carried out both successfully and mistake free. There is enough capacity of mindfulness left over for gaining knowledge by body-contemplating in the ways previously described. We can look over our shoulder, so to speak, at our *doings*. We can observe the "doer" from inside and out, and try to find answers to questions like: "Who is this doer? How does the doer actually come to appear on the scene?"

Complicated activities, like for instance working at the computer, leave little room for any kind of self-contemplation. Unwholesome, unethical activities even less so. These we ruled out earlier on.

Sweeping is a favourite among monks. There is a story in Zen Buddhism ...

But the practice of mindfulness, even in simple activities, is much more difficult than watching the body postures or the breath. The sequence given in this discourse makes perfect sense; it is an ascending sequence of progressing exercise.

Only coming and going?

Sometimes, no, actually most of the time, contemplation of origin and passing-away is understood as follows: we should be extra mindful of the fact that everything is arising and passing.

Yes, everything is arising and passing, however, this is not the object of the required contemplation. Neither is it the development of satipaṭṭhāna, but rather an exercise at the preliminary stage. This is clearly evident, because no transforming effect will manifest through this kind of contemplation. No change of view takes place.

Of course those who understand *origin&passing-away*, as being nothing more than an observation of temporal processes notice that too. To compensate for their lack of depth, they offer suggestions for further courses of action that just make everything rather complicated and actually unfeasible. Those suggestions are based on learned scholarly concepts, and have nothing to do with gaining knowledge from observed and observable phenomena. We shall examine those concepts later.

Correct observation of impermanence is important for us *before* we can move on to high school. But at this point here we are no longer concerned with the preliminary practices to satipaṭṭhāna. We are approaching the finish line.

The realisation of a stream-enterer can be found in some discourses with the following phrasing:

Right on this seat the dust-free immaculate vision of the Dhamma arose for him: “Whatever is a thing of origin, all that is a thing of cessation.”⁴⁵

M 56

This passage describes the entry into seeing the four noble truths. Things are “of origin”. Suffering is not just an unlucky coincidence *in* life, that can be avoided with a little more skill. No, the things of our existence *are* suffering, because they are “infected” with the origin of suffering. And it is precisely this understanding that opens up the possibility of ending this origin, this condition, of bringing it to *cease*.

Stream-enterers in higher training have entered the path that leads to the cessation of craving, and they know it! Anything that is still infected with craving will be freed from it.

Sometimes, no, actually most of the time, this passage from the suttas is understood thus: “All that arises, also passes.” Yes, that’s correct, but it is only the first step in the practice, it is not yet the vision of the Dhamma.

Back to the start!

Final sprint on all levels

Whatever is a thing of the origin of suffering, that too is a thing of the cessation of this origin; it comes to an end *as* suffering, it is no longer painful or stressful. This is the end of the practice. But we haven't arrived there yet.

Before we get there, we have to complete the *practice leading to the development of satipaṭṭhāna*, which includes right mindfulness, that is, satipaṭṭhāna. And we develop satipaṭṭhāna by practising the path, which contains satipaṭṭhāna. We develop satipaṭṭhāna with satipaṭṭhāna. This sounds like a self-confirming statement: "It is what it is". Or like a logical feedback loop: "It is so, because it is so".

But remembering back to the hologram we know that it isn't; Dhamma has to consist of Dhamma in all its parts. The path to liberation from suffering cannot contain anything else. This reflexivity can be found in all of our experience, provided we are looking at it correctly. And we remember: ignorance is not seen because we are ignorant. The weapon against ignorance must be of the same calibre – Dhamma on every level of experiencing.

And in the end, that's what it is all about: suffering is the problem of an experiencing person. The cause of it is the problem of an experiencing person. The cessation of the cause is a matter for an experiencing person. And, of course, the practice as well.

For liberation to be possible, self-contemplation or self-awareness is required; this should be clear by now. Someone who has a problem, must see himself or herself as someone who has a problem. The "contemplating experiencer" and the "contemplated experiencer", however, are not completely identical. They are counterparts on different levels of experience: observers observing themselves, but from a "higher" level.

Those observers who are in higher training have already attained a view that constantly changes their own standpoint. Their world has become more and more penetratingly known, and so has their relationship to it. And the observers themselves as well.

Against the grain

In the last phase of satipaṭṭhāna, the “homestretch” – where we can barely speak of training or exercise any more – the focus shifts. Right view has become fully established. Contemplation of origin and its cessation no longer yields anything new. Just: “There is a body.” Nothing more is necessary.

At this stage, a special kind of mindfulness is at work, doing away with the last bits of the conceit “I am”: working against the grain of ignorance. When this has been dealt with, there is no more taking-up of anything in the world.

This *against-the-grain mindfulness* does not appear in the suttas very often. It appears in reference to the last step towards liberation.

The mindful one against-the-grain,
when knowing things, is not enticed,
feels with a heart dispassionate,
without attachment is his stance.

So when he gets to know a thing,
and when in feeling he partakes,
he wears away, not piles it up,
proceeding mindful in this way.

Dismantling suffering like this,
he is Nibbāna’s freedom near.⁴⁶

S 35.95

School’s out

We practise mindfulness to apply it all around, to gain knowledge according to reality, to realise complete penetrating knowledge, to go against the grain of ignorance. The relationship to the world will change, the relationship to the body and the other application-bases of mindfulness will change. What happens then when complete penetrating knowledge has been fully realised?

Here, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having removed greed&grief in regard to the world. For him, who abides with the body body-contemplating, the body is completely penetratingly known. With the state of the body being completely penetratingly known, the deathless is realised.⁴⁷

S 47.38

What does the relationship to the world look like, when it is completely penetratingly known, when the practice has reached its end, when the deathless has been realised?

Bhikkhus, a bhikkhu who is an arahant, destroyer of the drives, who has lived the holy life, done what had to be done, laid down the burden, attained the goal, fully destroyed the fetters of being, and is liberated through right highest knowledge ... he does not conceive all as “mine,” he does not delight in all. Why is that? “It is *completely penetratingly known* for him,” I say.⁴⁸

M 1

So, an arahant has done that which had to be done. School’s out for him, there is nothing left to do. Does he still practise satipaṭṭhāna?

Bhikkhus, those who are arahants, destroyers of the drives, who have lived the holy life, done what had to be done, laid down the burden, attained the goal, fully destroyed the fetters of being, and are liberated through right *highest knowledge*^{*}, they too abide with the body body-contemplating ... with feelings feeling-contemplating ... with the heart heart-contemplating ... with things thing-contemplating, ardent, fully aware, unified, with an inspired heart, concentrated, with a one-peaked heart, *unfettered* by the body ... feelings ... the heart ... things.⁴⁹

S 47.4

I don't know whether this can still be called satipaṭṭhāna. The discourses don't say anything concerning this. But the liberated one continues to abide with the body, the feelings, the heart and things in the same manner – mindfully, fully aware and so on, just completely *unfettered*. And why does he abide thus?

For the arahant, friend, there is nothing further that has to be done and nothing to be added to what he has already done. However, these developed and cultivated things lead to a pleasant abiding here&now and to mindfulness&full awareness.⁵⁰

S 22.122

Ah, satipaṭṭhāna is pleasant for the school-leaver, and most likely it is not as arduous for an arahant as it is for our sort. Happy ending!

At this point our contemplations have reached their end, satipaṭṭhāna has been disclosed. All has been done that had to be done ...

“But wait a minute! This doesn't yet apply to us!”

That's right, and on top of that, a big portion of the discourse is still to come. After this brief gazing up at the stars, we can now once again return to the earlier stages of the practice, stages that may be more relevant for us. And at this point the philosophers can be re-admitted to the game as well, as they have discovered one or two tools of analysis in *their* practice that might be useful for us all in primary school.

PART 2

—

UNSCIENTIFIC SATIPAṬṬHĀNĀ

The Discourse – *Reflections*

Again, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu *reflects** on this very body up from the soles of the feet and down from the top of the hair, enveloped by skin, and full of many kinds of impurities: ‘In this body there are head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, bone-marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, diaphragm, spleen, lungs, large intestines, small intestines, contents of the stomach, faeces, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, saliva, snot, synovia and urine.’

Just as if a sack with openings at both ends were full of many sorts of grain, such as wheat, rice, mung beans, kidney beans, sesame seeds, and husked rice, and a man with good eyesight were to open it and reflect on it: ‘This is wheat, this is rice, these are mung beans, these are kidney beans, these are sesame seeds, this is husked rice’; in the same way, a bhikkhu reflects on this very body ...

In this way he abides internally ... This too, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating.

Again, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu reflects on this very body, however it is placed, however it is disposed, *by way of properties**: ‘In this body there is the *earth property**, the water property, the fire property, and the wind property.’

Just as if a skilled butcher or his apprentice, having killed a cow, would sit at a crossroads, having cut it up into pieces; in the same way, a bhikkhu reflects on this very body ...

In this way he abides internally ... This too, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating.

1. The Sixth Sense

Part 1 of this book dealt with the application-bases of mindfulness in a *general* way. We have staked out the terrain as it were. We contemplated how satipaṭṭhāna, in a threefold way, that is, in three steps or stages, makes the entry to higher training, and finally to the successful ending of the practice possible.

Now we want to look at how the various *specific* aspects or tools of the practice are used on the application-bases of mindfulness, how they prepare the soil, so that the required straightened right view can arise. It's all about certain laws or principles of existence that are normally veiled by our craving for being. We can use the skilful means that the Buddha has given to us to lift the veil. The understanding gained this way, even in the initial stage of practice, goes against the grain of the fundamental condition of suffering: it weakens the urge to take up this and that.

Even if those initial insights may not yet be strong enough to enable entry into the stream of Dhamma, from the very beginning they are still helping to cut back on the unwholesome patterns of thinking and behaviour that make life difficult for us.

In this chapter we engage with a new aspect of mindfulness practice, one which continues the trend towards increasingly more mental activity. At first we had the calm, but not inactive, *understanding* of the breath, then the *understanding* of the body postures, and then after that, it was about having *full awareness* of simple activities.

The type of gaining cognizance presented to us here in which thought is being used is called “reflecting”.

Compared to the preceding exercises, it is even more difficult here to stay with the topic without drifting off, let alone to keep contemplating “internally and/or externally”. A considerable amount of focus, collectedness, concentration is essential.

Painful strain of the brain?

Some schools or meditation traditions cannot warm to the topic of reflection; they either ignore it, exclude it from their system of teaching, or claim outright that this is not the original teaching of the Buddha – unlike their own meditation method™:

“Thinking has nothing to do with meditation! Satipaṭṭhāna requires a pure mindfulness that watches passively and objectively, and observes reality in a neutral and uninvolved way. Thinking is not reality, just an intellectual game, and plainly a painful strain of the brain!”

Let’s not slide back! For we have excluded the objective standpoint right from the outset, and passive satipaṭṭhāna is plainly a contradiction in terms. But then what could “*pure* mindfulness” mean?

“Pure” in the sense of a freedom that is as far away as possible from the inner states that are an obstacle to clear seeing, first and foremost *greed&grief in regard to the world* – this is indeed how our practice should be. But after reading Part 1, it should also be clear that even the keenest kind of mindfulness still looks through distorting glasses, meaning, it is governed by the respective viewpoint. Even if we do our best to acquire the *straight view*, which neither excludes nor overemphasises the observer, our mindfulness can never be neutral; the untaught ordinary human being looks through the glasses of an *unquestioned* I-making and mine-making. In higher training, the glasses of a *questioned* or *challenged* I-making and mine-making. Only the arahant has a way of looking, and a kind of mindfulness that is “pure” in this sense.

And how does thinking relate to reality?

In the Buddha’s teaching there is talk of six sense domains and six sense faculties. There are the five “material” senses – seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching – and they are joined by a sixth sense, the mind.

The object of our mindful contemplations here is the body – as we expressed it in the “What is body anyway?” chapter, the *experienced* body – the sum total of all body-related phenomena, which we experience through our various senses, including the mind sense.

Friend, these five *faculties** each have a different field, a different pasture, and do not experience each other’s pasture&field, that is, the eye faculty, the ear faculty, the nose faculty, the tongue faculty, and the body faculty. Now for these five faculties, each having a different field, a different pasture, not experiencing each other’s pasture&field, the *mind** is a help, and the mind experiences their pasture&field.⁵¹

M 43

And what would “to be a help” mean? According to its origin, the Pāli term *paṭisaraṇa* can be understood as being a “place to be run towards and met”: the five external senses run towards and meet in the mind. The mind “receives” the objects of the five external senses like a kind of control centre. But what are the objects *of the mind*?

In the discourses in Pāli they are called *dhammā* (plural), literally “things”. But the usual answer that one finds is: “The objects of the mind are *mind objects*.” This information is not overly instructive. Others have suggested “thoughts”. Now this answer is better, but still not really sufficient. Besides, it requires a qualification. *What is a thought?*

In this context, it is conspicuous that the term “mind” (*mano*) in the discourses is used not only as a word for the sixth sense, but also for one of the three “doors” of action – body, speech and mind. The mind (*mano*) performs mental action. Mental action is more than just thinking, therefore the concept of an “organ of thinking” is not really adequate. Could it be that what the mind does is related to what the mind experiences?

Here the observations of phenomenology provide useful approaches that might help us to understand.

So, the mind receives the objects – or pasture&fields – of the five “material” faculties: the immediate or “real” experience of forms, sounds, odours, flavours and tangibles. What do these five immediately experienced types of objects have in common? All of them are *things*. “Things” is *more general* than any of these five types, not only in terms of term. “Things” is on a higher level of experience; it is “above” forms, sounds and so on.

These things in the mind – its “objects” – could also be described as reflexive images of the immediate experience. That does not only refer to images of the inner eye, but also to “images” of the “mental” ear, the “mental” nose, the “mental” tongue, the “mental” body. These images are thoughts in the broadest sense.

Whenever we ask ourselves: “What am I experiencing right now?”, the mind answers directly and without pondering with an image that is the same as, or better said, congruent with, the immediate experience, with what is present. This phenomenon in phenomenologist parlance is called “reflexive re-duplication”, in Buddhist jargon simply “sati, mindfulness”. This reflexive image is the most basic, most simple form of a thought.

In some meditation systems “mental noting” is used as an aid to mindfulness; words that denote the immediate experience, as well as the image that is at the same time provided by mindfulness. These inner words are images too, but of a more complex order; they are more complex thoughts.

Whenever we think of an immediate experience which is *not* present, that is, which is *not here* and/or *not now*, then we have images that are not a re-duplication of something which is already present, but images of something absent. And the mind *presents* this something, *makes* it present, *brings* it to the present. If this absent immediate experience is in the past, we *re-member* its image. Or if this absent something is in the future – plans, which we *picture* to ourselves – we *imagine* images of future possibilities.



Re-duplication of the present or absence?

Possibilities are images that are always there, even in concrete immediate experience, in a subtle way. These images too do not represent something that is present. Possibility, purpose, meaning, intention are images of something *absent*. An example:

When I look at my ballpoint pen, which is lying in front of me on my desk while I type my handwritten notes, I see in the pen and without further pondering, that it is a writing instrument. But I can only see this *in it*, because together with the immediate sight – the visible form – I have subtle images which show this elongated piece of metal while it is being used for writing. This may be a memory or a “glimpse of the future”. At any rate, the act of writing happens *not now*. It is there, but not here, it is absent. It is included as an image, as an illustration, so to say, of the purpose or intention of the object in front of me.

This gives us a hint as to why the mind is also a door of action. Any action is intentional, that means, it envisages a result which is *not present*. But before and during the action, its result is always present *as an image*, however vague, as a present *possibility* of an absent situation. To “envisage” appears to be an activity in itself. For now, we do not have to decide whether the mind fetches the image or produces it, but all of this indicates clearly that what the mind does is indeed related to what the mind experiences.

This shall suffice as an introduction. Maybe laterⁱ I will write more on the topic of “images” and “things”.

A specific way to “envisage” something is mentioned in the discourse: one *reflects* on the body as it is composed of parts and pieces.

Divide and spoil!

This reflection on the body as being a bag of skin filled with assorted impurities, is referred to in the suttas as the contemplation of non-beauty, *asubhānupassanā*, or perception of non-beauty, *asubhasaññā* (e.g. in the Girimānanda Sutta, A 10. 60).

It is not a course in anatomy – the brain is conspicuously absent from this list. At the time of the Buddha more was known about the body than just this.

“Just this” – that’s how the body ought to be seen, not as ugly, not as beautiful, but as “not beautiful”. It’s all about a sober contemplation as the simile of the different types of grain illustrates: rice, beans, sesame ... no reason to get excited or upset.

We already surmise that this is meant to overcome the “attachment to the body”. We may rightly express it like this, provided that not only greed for corporeality is meant, but also its opposite, a dis-

i This “maybe later” breaks through the timelessness of the finished book. It is an example of a possibility or intention: an image of myself writing more on it. And besides, this should suffice for now as an indication that *all* topics in this book are continued. And in the end it is just one topic from the beginning to the end anyway.

turbed relationship with the body – disgust, repulsion, a negative image of one’s own body. The contemplation of non-beauty is *not* an exercise in loathing if it is practised in accordance with the Buddha’s teaching.

To prevent it from turning into a practice of abhorrence or detestation, the Buddha often taught it in combination with breath awareness; the first time he did this, was after it actually had gone wrong, and mass suicide had resulted. Mindfulness of the breathing is conducive to the necessary balance.

For those, bhikkhus, who, abiding with the body, master the contemplation of non-beauty, the urge towards passion in regard to the property of beauty is abandoned. With an internally well established ready-to-use mindfulness of the in-&out-breaths, there are no external thought patterns of a destructive nature ...

Seeing non-beauty in body,
against-the-grain-mindful with breath;
calming of determinations
sees one who is always ardent.⁵²

(Iti 85)

This practice is not intended to slam or slander the body, although it may well help monks and nuns to protect their celibate lifestyle by taking the wind out of the sails of unrealistic fantasies. Seeing the body as something composed of parts spoils all enticement: the body is “beautiful” only as a whole.

But “asubha” can do even more! To reflect on parts of the body goes against the grain of the urge towards an unquestioned *identification* with the body.

What has parts and successions is repugnant to the very nature of our being.⁵³

Jean Grenier

What is the very nature of our being? What are its properties?

The nature of being is its origin: our being is subject to craving and its result – acquisition, taking-up of properties that are ultimately not ours. It is the craving to be a self, an “I”, a subject, an ego. To be sure, we *do* experience being an “I”, a self, a subject, but we can never “prove” it, we’ve got nothing to show for it. We try hard all the time by identifying ourselves with this or that – “*That* I am.” And because there is no “that” to provide a place for our selves forever, we suffer.

An assumed “I” or self can never consist of parts. Everybody is *one solid* I, and experiences himself or herself as an *indivisible* self. Thus the unquestioned identification with the body is weakened by “asubha”: for “I am the body” becomes impossible when this body is reflected on as a hotchpotch of parts. It loses its attraction as an object of identification.

Unfortunately, by simply practising asubha we do not yet become awakened, not even enlightened. For the “I” evades scrutiny. If it can’t be the body any more, well, then it just becomes the “owner of the body”. It is that simple! The practice, on the other hand, is not that simple.

To view the body as a collection of parts is nevertheless useful. It leads almost automatically to contemplating the body externally. As we have seen in the “Entering Satipaṭṭhāna” chapter this exposes the structure of identification! Parts and successions go against the grain of any self-image.

Now, is the reflected image of the body something present or absent? The parts are present. We can see skin, nails, body hair immediately – i.e. directly with the five “material” senses – where they are. We can sense the bones and muscles immediately. But we may also use images (predominantly visual ones) of inner organs, which we *cannot* experience immediately at the time of reflecting. We know from an anatomy book what a heart looks like and we can visualise it as a mental image.

For this contemplation to function as described above, it doesn't matter whether its object is present as an immediate experience, or as an image of something absent, or as a mixture of both. There is a great variety of methods and techniques for how this type of body contemplation can be carried out in its concrete application. They are described in a number of textbooks on meditation; they are not a topic in *this* book.

One image though, which does not arise from contemplating, arises subtly and uninvited in the background, whenever reflexion (self-contemplation) takes place. This image comes to light only when reflexion is already progressing along the path of the threefold development of satipaṭṭhāna. It is a self-image, an existential selfie.

Mostly it is one's own face: for the face is where all senses are located. It is our inter-*face* to our world. Our IDs – *identity* documents – answer the question, “Who am I?”, with data and a picture: a passport photo shows a face as the bearer of identity of the individual concerned. It never shows the buttocks, even if they may be just as individual.

This unasked-for inner passport photo is a product of the craving for being, the origin of all suffering. So indeed it shows an “original” face.

The original face is questioned in Zen Buddhism with the question as to what it might have looked like before the birth of one's own parents:^j

Fubomishō izen no honrai no menmoku ikan?⁵⁴

Trad. Kōan attributed to Hui-Neng

j In Zen, however, the “original face” is an expression for the “non-dualistic nature of the true Self”. Things are not seen as phenomenological there as they are in this book. The idea of a higher self hidden behind the ordinary ego is a position of idealism. Admittedly, Zen rejects all philosophy as dualistic pitfalls, but exactly this again is an expression of the idealist position.

Proper properties

By contemplating the body as a hotchpotch, we have spoilt it as an object of identification, as being the “owner”. Now on top of that we will spoil it as being a “possession”.

As in the previous exercise, we will reflect on something that is directly present, along with images of something absent, next to each other. Now some intensification will be added to this, both in the level of difficulty and in the effectiveness. The body is to be mirrored from the standpoint of some fundamental properties: the properties or qualities of earth, water, fire, wind.

What, bhikkhu, is the earth property? The earth property may be either internal or external. What is the internal earth property? Whatever is internal, belonging to oneself, solid, solidified and taken-up, that is, head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, bone-marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, diaphragm, spleen, lungs, large intestines, small intestines, contents of the stomach, faeces or whatever else is internal, belonging to oneself, solid, solidified and taken-up: This is called the internal earth property.

M 140

These properties are basic categories of experience. Sometimes two more are listed: space and consciousness. We could call them “elements”, provided ideas of indivisibility, permanence and absoluteness are not brought into play.

Here in meditation these fundamental properties of the experienced body are touched, sensed by the touch faculty – for example in the case of the earth property as solidity or hardness. We can hold, say, fingernails and their solidity in our contemplation next to each other. They are one and the same experience, taking place in one and the same spot. And yet, seeing them as fingernails is somehow different. There are two different kinds of looking, depending on the focus of our attention, that is, what we are looking at, what we are paying

attention to. By the way, this exercise is referred to as “attention to the properties”. The parts&pieces exercise five pages ago is called “attention to the disagreeable” or more literally, “attention *against the slope*”^{*}.

And what are we attentive to when we pay attention to the properties? Again to the body, but somehow from a higher perspective, a higher “look-out”. That’s precisely the crucial point. We use an ability of the mind that is of the highest importance for the practice, and for an understanding of the Dhamma. The mind can distinguish different levels of experience and compare them. It can “dwell” on different levels. What are these levels?

The observing mind withdraws its attention from the *specific* properties of the various solid parts of the body and contemplates the more *general* aspects – that which they have in common: solidity.

The immediate benefit is obvious, and can be experienced “first hand”. Even if we reflect on the body as being a hotchpotch, the parts still keep a little remainder of “personality”. I would recognise *my* fingernails among hundreds!^k But it would never cross my mind to speak of “my” earth element.

Not to take the body personally, to look at it from a higher level, can be helpful in our everyday life, for example to bear illness more patiently. “*I am sick*” becomes, “The elements are in disorder.” We suffer a bit less from suffering. Even seeing *that* is an insight. And what is the benefit in the greater context of the teaching?

Now both the internal earth property and the external earth property are simply earth property. And that should be seen according to reality with right wisdom thus: “This is not mine, this one I am not, this one is not my self.” Having seen it thus according to reality with proper wisdom, one becomes disenchanted with the

k An entire profession is occupied with highlighting the personal note of fingernails – by painting, extending, filing, polishing and sticking decoration on them. Concealing non-beauty is a laborious task.

earth property and makes the heart dispassionate towards the earth property.⁵⁵

M 140

The same holds true for the other three properties: water, fire and wind. Water is cohesion; the examples in the suttas concern the various kinds of bodily fluids. Fire is temperature and a change of state, for example digestion and the ageing process. Wind is movement, not only in the breath and bowels, but also the various flows of energy in the body. Any behaviour of form¹ – here the body – can be described in terms of these four properties.

Reflecting on the fundamental properties is an *analysis*, as the simile of the cut up cow illustrates. But this cutting up does not imply *abstraction*; the properties can certainly be experienced immediately – i.e. directly with the five external or “material” senses.

Something to keep in mind: these four basic elements occur mixed together all throughout the body. We can take the image of the four roads meeting at the crossroads as a simile for this. Attributing these elements to the particular parts of the body implies more of an emphasis: faeces is an *example* of earth property, but of course in faeces we also find the water property, just like the other two (the fire element in faeces increases after the consumption of Thai food).

We are not so much concerned with finding out which touch sensation belongs to which element. The point is rather to regard *this* as ownerless, in order to develop disenchantment and dispassion. In the previous chapter the body had to give way as the dwelling of its owner. And now: “*This is not mine.*” It is not even my possession any more! Well, are we now enlightened?

Regretfully still not. In the first place, the sentence on expropriation continues. At this point, however, we cannot yet make much of it – “I am not the earth element, neither am I my fingernail, so what?”

1 *Form* is a term which we have not disclosed yet. For the time being we can equate it with “matter”.

The experiencing and somehow experienced “I” evades again! Although it is no longer the owner of the body, it nevertheless becomes some kind of authority that knows about all this: “I am the one who knows that the body – even more so the earth property – doesn’t belong to me.” Frustrating, after more than 80 pages ...

Practice on all levels

Let’s come back to the topic of levels. We have contemplated two different aspects of experience: parts of the body, and their properties. How do those two aspects relate to each other?

Lungs and liver, skin and spleen, flesh and faeces are *more specific* than the property that they have in common. Earthy things are *more specific* than the earth property in general. The general stands, so to speak, *above* the specific things: it is a hierarchy of experience.

The “hierarchical structure” of the “levels of generality” belongs to the 101 of phenomenology; it is one of its most important principles. This is not all just philosophical bells and whistles; it deals with a fundamental principle of the Buddha’s teaching.

What does “hierarchical structure” mean? It describes the relationship between two adjacent levels of experience, for example like this:

higher level	lower level
general	specific, special, particular
background	foreground
condition	(conditioned) thing
relative timelessness	change
concentration, non-proliferation	dispersion, proliferation
principle	example
purpose, intention	means
truth	reality

... and so on.

For example, from my hut I could look at different trees, or without changing my gaze even the slightest, I could look at the forest. So “forest” is more general than “trees” and is on a higher level.

It is important to understand that all levels are relative. Each more general, higher level has an even higher level above it; it is a specific example of that higher level. My skull is an example of bone-ness, bone-ness is an example of earth property, earth property is an example of materiality in general.

Any law or principle that is more general in its nature *discloses* its respective more specific examples; it is what the more specific things “in truth” are.

And how true is that, pray tell? True according to the conditions at the level of the respective stage. For example, skin is true at the level of its skin-ness, flesh is true at the level of its flesh-ness, sinews are true at the level of their sinew-ness, bones are true at the level of their bone-ness. For example.⁵⁶

Khemapatto Bhikkhu (Luang Pū Lā)

And a wonderful example at that! An example of the principle of relativity of levels, given by a realised master from Thailand who most likely had never heard a thing about phenomenology. So what do the canonical texts say about this? Is there ever any talk of “hierarchical structure” and “levels of generality” in the suttas?

Yes, generalisation is mentioned in a few passages, but not many. And “counterparts” on different levels also occur, but likewise rather rarely.

Conditionality, or relationships of dependence, cause and effect, origin and result are constantly talked about. This topic is virtually the essence of the teaching. And it is exactly the very same topic of the hierarchical structure of different levels – the relationship between condition and conditioned thing.

“Solidity” is relatively *timeless* compared to “bones”. The bones *come and go* (see next chapter), but solidity itself remains – it, when compared to the bones, is always the same.

“Forest” is the *background* for “trees”. If we only pay attention to the surface, the *foreground*, we may “miss the forest for the trees”.

My fingernails are an *example* of the *principle* that fingernails are hard.

“All well and good, but what has all of this got to do with Dhamma practice?”

If a phenomenologist sees a duck-billed platypus, he does *not* exclaim with rapture ‘What a strange creature! What a magnificent addition to the sum of human knowledge (and also to my collection of stuffed curiosities)’; he says, instead, ‘This is an example of a living being’, thus putting the platypus with all its duck-billed peculiarities ‘in brackets’ and considering only the universal characteristics of his experience of the platypus. But a dog would have done just as well; for a dog, too, is ‘an example of a living being’; and besides, there is no need to go all the way to Australia to see one. The phenomenologist does not seek *variety*, he seeks *repetition* – repetition, that is to say, of experience (what it is experience *of* does not interest him in the least), so that he may eventually come to understand the nature of experience.⁵⁷

Ñāṇavīra Bhikkhu

We generalise things in our experience and disclose principles. Understanding the nature of experience is virtually the *essence* of satipaṭṭhāna (as mentioned in the foreword)!

Understanding is the step prior to transcending. (Remember? The hologram!) Transcending (here: disenchantment, dispassion) requires knowing and seeing according to reality with right wisdom, as it is

expressed in the following words: “This is not mine, this one I am not, this one is not my self.” This statement occurs often in the suttas and it always refers to rather general aspects of experience. The four properties are just the beginning of it.

We don’t find such a statement with reference to specific things. “Hair is not mine, teeth are not mine, the liver is not mine, the stomach is not mine ...” – this does not come up in the discourses.

The universe is a vast and varied place. If we had to take care of all the specific details and peculiarities we would never come to an end.

To turn away from the specific contents of experience and turn towards the nature of experience is not only what a phenomenologist is looking for, it is also the direction of the search for liberation. From the specific to the general: to not get lost in details is precisely the principle of unification (or concentration, collectedness) of the heart, of samādhi. Not trying to examine every thing empirically, but to understand regularities and conformity to natural laws, is the principle of wisdom.

Here, a bhikkhu’s heart jumps into the cessation of proliferation, becomes bright, comes to standing still, and is liberated in it. When it was said: “This Dhamma is for one who likes non-proliferation, who loves non-proliferation, not for one who likes proliferation, who loves proliferation,” it was dependent on this that this was said.⁵⁸

A8.30

“Well then, isn’t it wrong to cut up the body into parts? That’s exactly the proliferation and dissipation which we are told to avoid in order to develop wisdom, isn’t it?”

No! Cutting up the body is not wrong. (I mean in meditation, not for real!) It is not an act of getting lost in details, because “body” and “body parts” are on one and the same level. The body is *composed* of parts, but it is not more general than its parts. We can prove this to ourselves with a little gedanken experiment:

Would it bother our monastery forest if we took away a few trees? No, because this forest is more general than the individual trees in it. The forest does not die when a few trees die. It is, *in comparison* to the trees, relatively timeless – eternal.

Even if we cut down *all* trees in a *specific* forest, “forest” as a landscape form or a type of vegetation in general would still be there. *Other* specific forests would then be examples of “forest in general”.

With the body it is a different story. It is *not* timeless in comparison to the body parts. When the body parts die, so does the body, and vice versa. And if we take away a part of it, this will definitely bother the body. For example, if we peel off its skin.

This brings us to the next topic. Before we get there we have some space for

NOTES

The Discourse – *Death contemplation*

Again, bhikkhus, as if a bhikkhu *were to see** a corpse thrown aside in a charnel ground, one, two, or three days dead, bloated, livid, and oozing matter, he *compares** this very body with it: ‘This body too *is such a thing, has such a nature**, has not gone beyond this.’ ...

Again, bhikkhus, as if a bhikkhu were to see a corpse thrown aside in a charnel ground, being devoured by crows, hawks, vultures, herons, dogs, tigers, leopards, jackals, or various kinds of worms, he compares this very body with it: ‘This body too is such a thing, has such a nature, has not gone beyond this.’ ...

Again, bhikkhus, as if a bhikkhu were to see a corpse thrown aside in a charnel ground, a skeleton with flesh and blood, held together with sinews ... a fleshless skeleton smeared with blood, held together with sinews ... a skeleton without flesh and blood, held together with sinews ... disconnected bones scattered in all directions – here a hand-bone, there a foot-bone, here a shin-bone, there a thigh-bone, here a hip-bone, there a back-bone, there a skull – he compares this very body with it: ‘This body too is such a thing, has such a nature, has not gone beyond this.’ ...

Again, bhikkhus, as if a bhikkhu were to see a corpse thrown aside in a charnel ground, bones bleached white, the colour of shells ... bones heaped up, years old ... rotting and crumbled to dust, he compares this very body with it: ‘This body too is such a thing, has such a nature, has not gone beyond this.’

In this way he abides internally ... This too, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating.

2. Corpses on the Path

Now we have arrived at the last exercise in body contemplation. The phrasing “*as if one were to see a corpse*” already indicates that the mind is again more active than it was in the first three exercises (breath, body postures, activities). The mind imagines a corpse. The mind produces an image.

In principle, it doesn’t matter whether we have actually ever seen a corpse in “real life” or not. The image of a corpse, an absent experience, is not so hard to grab if such an image is on hand as a memory. And if not, the mind can still “picture” a human corpse. Everyone has probably seen the carcass of an animal and can therefore transfer this sight over to another absent experience, the imaginary image of a dead human body.

Better still would of course be the reflexive re-duplication mentioned above – in other words: a corpse that is on hand in our immediate experience. At the time of the Buddha, monks went to a charnel ground for this very purpose, a place where corpses were thrown to fester and feed, presumably in order to save firewood. Nowadays there aren’t any charnel grounds like this, but bhikkhus “like” to watch autopsies; there they find immediate visual aids that can be used for the exercise in this chapter: and also for the contemplation of body parts that was dealt with in the previous chapter.

“But ... what’s the point of all of this? A veritable horror show: *livid and oozing matter ... devoured by various kinds of worms ... skeleton smeared with blood!* Do we really need that? And on top of that why in nine different variants?”

The quick answer to the last question: the Buddha clearly wanted to emphasise the importance of this topic. That’s why he repeated it nine times. Besides, the various stages of decay have different “flavours”. A comparatively fresh corpse still has some “personality”, and is comparable in its effect to the contemplation of body parts. At the other end of the spectrum the bones crumble to dust – that’s a straightforward contemplation of the elements.

Why authentic?

“Alright, so it is about death. One will die one day, it’s a well known fact. But does meditation on death really have to be that weird? That one has not gone beyond ... mortality, this everyone knows already! So why all this crudity?”

Well, more interesting than answering this would be to ask in return: *Why* would one find this weird or crude? A philosopher answers:

In the publicness with which we are with one another in our everyday manner, death is “known” as a mishap which is constantly occurring – as a “case of death”. Someone or other “dies”, be he neighbour or stranger. People who are no acquaintances of ours are “dying” daily and hourly. “Death” is encountered as a well-known event occurring within-the-world. As such it remains in the inconspicuousness characteristic of what is encountered in an everyday fashion. The “they” has already stowed away an interpretation for this event. It talks of it in a “fugitive” manner, either expressly or else in a way which is mostly inhibited, as if to say, “One of these days one will die too, in the end; but right now it has nothing to do with us.”

In such a way of talking, death is understood as an indefinite something which, above all, must duly arrive from somewhere or other, but which is proximally *not yet present-at-hand* for oneself, and is therefore no threat. The expression “one dies” spreads abroad the opinion that what gets reached, as it were, by death, is the “they”. In Dasein’s public way of interpreting, it is said that “one dies”, because everyone else and oneself can talk himself into saying that “in no case is it I myself”, for this “one” is the “nobody”.

But along with this tranquillization, which forces Dasein away from its death, the “they” at the same time

puts itself in the right and makes itself respectable by tacitly regulating the way in which one has to comport oneself towards death. It is already a matter of public acceptance that “thinking about death” is a cowardly fear, a sign of insecurity on the part of Dasein, and a sombre way of fleeing from the world. *The “they” does not permit us the courage for anxiety in the face of death.*⁵⁹

Martin Heidegger

And what would such an anxiety or fear of death be good for? Heidegger explains that it helps us to become “authentic”, real, genuine people who are ready to take responsibility for their existence, for their way of being. We are advised not to flee into the anonymity of the “they”. So, where does this tendency to escape into the “they” come from anyway?

In the eyes of Buddhho-phenomenology it represents an escape into the supposed objectivity of one’s own existence – an *original* escape. The *origin* of suffering, craving for an objective and unthreatened way of being, is the condition by which “one” (or the “they”) tries to take “oneself” out of the overall picture, all based on a tacit belief that “one” can thus escape the contradiction of existence (dealt with in the “Development of Satipaṭṭhāna” chapter). But we *are there*, and not forever at that – that’s the way it is. And we are personally *answerable* for this being there, no-one else! Not even the “they”.

The “they” is there alongside everywhere, but in such a manner that it has always stolen away whenever Dasein presses for a decision. Yet because the “they” presents every judgment and decision as its own, it deprives the particular Dasein of its answerability. The “they” can, as it were, manage to have ‘them’ constantly invoking it. It can be answerable for everything most easily, because it is not someone who needs to vouch for anything. It ‘was’ always the “they” who did it, and yet it can be said that it has been ‘no one’. [...]

The “they” is not something like a ‘universal subject’ which a plurality of subjects have hovering above them.

That ... the traditional logic fails us when confronted with these phenomena, is not surprising ...⁶⁰

Martin Heidegger

So, the “they” is not my background, not a higher purpose of being, not a more general level of existence. It is merely an existential evasive manoeuvre, *produced* by myself.

To become “authentic” and to carry an answerability for one’s own actions is the precondition for ethics. It is that which deals with the question: “What *should I do*?” Ethics does not deal with the questions: “What *are ‘they’ doing*? What *does ‘one’ do*?” Such matters are for social scientists and politicians. We are looking at ethics here; “political correctness” is a totally different kettle of fish.

To take responsibility not only for our own *doing*, but also for our own *being* – this is actually the essence of the Buddha’s teaching. That we *are* responsible for our Dasein is something that Heidegger, Sartre & Co. also knew, but beyond this point they could not really make any headway. They did realise that we “are condemned to the freedom to choose ourselves”, which in Buddho-phenomenological terms we can roughly equate with “taking-up”, but they didn’t see that there is a path leading towards choosing the end of choosing.

Death-awareness in general, and the charnel ground exercise more specifically, remind us not to waste our time: death can come anytime. Death *will* come anytime, that means, *when* death comes, it is *anytime*, not “one of these days”.

Death has two peculiarities: Firstly, it is a possibility of being-there that fundamentally changes this being-there, that is, it ends it (in this form). As such it is, in Heidegger’s words, “not to be outstripped”.

Non-existence, however, is for us as existing beings beyond imagination! And subjectively or phenomenologically we can (and must) say, that it is not we who die from the world; the world is dying from us.

And secondly, death is a combination of certainty and uncertainty. It is certain, and not to be outstripped (or: outmatched) that we die. It is uncertain, when (and how) we will die. Any date is possible.

Death is a prime example of the nature of impermanence in its general sense: all phenomena *will* change, this is certain, but what is not sure, is *when* that change will occur. Mortality is present *now*. The charnel ground contemplations provide an antidote for the inauthentic attitude which takes it for granted that death is not yet *present-at-hand*.⁶¹

In order to understand these peculiarities better, let us turn our attention again to the different levels of experience, and then in this light examine the way of gaining cognizance that is being used here.

Presently absent decomposition

In what way did the Buddha express this? Put simply, the bhikkhu *compares*. The requirement for a valid comparison is twofold.

Firstly, a difference is needed, that is, two different things. If he contemplated only this body, it would be an act of understanding or reflecting, but not a *com-paring*. So far, so good.

Secondly, a non-difference is needed, that is, something the two different things have in common – ah, now we have our levels again! There must be something on a more general level that is the same, which can then be *com*-pared (or, for that matter, *com-paired*).

If for example we wanted to compare something like, “What tastes better, an apple or a locomotive?”, then any attempt to decide on this would be completely futile, because a shared higher level is missing. A locomotive is not an edible.^m

m We could think back to the previous chapter and claim that “apple” and “locomotive” are both earth property. But earth property is the behaviour of form, whereas taste is a perception. Thus, there is no common basis for comparison. At this stage we have, however, not yet clarified what the difference between “behaviour of form” and “perception” is. So, for now, we will express it simply: earth property tastes of nothing!

In the case of the charnel ground contemplations, how does difference manifest? A corpse is dead. This body is alive. They can be compared because both are bodies. We remember that there are two different words in Pāli for “body”: *kāya* is the living body, *sarīra* is the body of flesh, either alive or dead. As a word “*sarīra*” appears here on two different levels. But, for the purpose of comparison here this is of no consequence:

1. Now this body is *not* a corpse yet: the *actual* decomposition remains *absent* for an undetermined length of time. That is the difference. It emphasises the uncertainty of death.

2. This body *too is such a thing*, a mortal meat loaf (*sarīra* in general), it *has the nature* of a corpse (*sarīra* in the specific sense). Its *possible* decomposition is *present*. This is what they have in common. As a note, the text doesn’t say: “It *will not* go beyond this”. It says: “It *has not gone* beyond this”. Meaning that death is already *there*, just not yet *here*!

The comparing mind holds, as it were, both the absent actual decomposition, and the decomposition that is present as a higher level possibility, next to each other. It is because the mind can do this that such comparing is at all possible.

At this point we want to compare *comparing* with the other ways of gaining understanding:

Among the fourteen body contemplations, comparing is the most complex way of gaining cognizance.

First we *understood* the body as it is present in immediate experience. Then we *reflected* on it by calling in absent aspects (images). Then, to further enhance this, we put the present body “in brackets” and *reflected* on it, as an example of certain principles on a higher level. While *comparing*, we contemplate the difference between (this) present and (that) absent on the same level, as well as the common present on a higher level.

No. / object	way of knowing	mental image	relation to the body
1 breath, 2 postures	understanding	present	same level
3 activities	being aware	present	same level
4 body parts	reflecting	present & image thereof	same level
5 properties	reflecting	(present &) image thereof	(same level &) higher level
6 ff. decomposition	comparing	present/absent	same level
		present	higher level

(This hologram business is all well and good, but we all *love* neat and tidy charts, don't we?)

It is important to clearly understand this combination of *identity* and *difference* on different levels, and to really take this in, because there is one *particular* instance of comparison that is of the utmost importance for practising the Buddha's teaching. Namely, comparing the before and the after: the perception of impermanence.

Rāhula, develop meditation on the perception of impermanence; for when you develop meditation on the perception of impermanence, the conceit "I am" will be abandoned for you.⁶²

M 62

Perception of impermanence is a condition for attaining the highest goal. At first glance this doesn't appear difficult. It is indeed doable if we proceed phenomenologically. But unfortunately there are some popular "Buddhist" approaches that thoroughly thwart it.

And now, for the sake of completeness, a closing remark on the topic of body contemplation: comparing this body (kāya) "here" with a corpse (sarīra) "over there" has nothing to do with satipaṭṭhāna at the "internally/externally" stage. Even while corpse-comparing, we abide body-contemplating internally and externally only with *this body*.

The Discourse - *Contemplation of feeling*

And how, bhikkhus, does a bhikkhu abide with feelings feeling-contemplating? Here, when feeling a pleasant feeling, a bhikkhu understands: 'I feel a pleasant feeling'; when feeling a painful feeling, he understands: 'I feel a painful feeling'; when feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, he understands: 'I feel a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling.'

When feeling a pleasant feeling *of the flesh*^{*}, he understands: 'I feel a pleasant feeling of the flesh'; when feeling a pleasant feeling *not of the flesh*^{*}, he understands: 'I feel a pleasant feeling not of the flesh'; when feeling a painful feeling of the flesh, he understands: 'I feel a painful feeling of the flesh'; when feeling a painful feeling not of the flesh, he understands: 'I feel a painful feeling not of the flesh'; when feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling of the flesh, he understands: 'I feel a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling of the flesh'; when feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling not of the flesh, he understands: 'I feel a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling not of the flesh.'

In this way he abides internally with feelings feeling-contemplating, or he abides externally with feelings feeling-contemplating, or he abides internally&externally with feelings feeling-contemplating. Or else contemplating as things of origin he abides with feelings, or contemplating as things of passing-away he abides with feelings, or contemplating as things of origin&passing-away he abides with feelings. Or else 'there is feeling' mindfulness is present for him, just for the right measure of knowing and against-the-grain mindfulness. And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with feelings feeling-contemplating.

3. Where is Here?

That's enough on abiding with the body, let us now abide with feelings, feeling-contemplating. Has mindfulness now gone somewhere else?

No, mindfulness is still established in (or with) the body. In the discourses there is mention of *mindfulness-merged-in-the-body** (kāyagatāsati). The Kāyagatāsati Sutta (M 119) deals extensively with this topic: the first 14 exercises therein are identical to the 14 exercises of body-contemplation (kāyānupassanā) in our discourse here. That's why many people, quite understandably, wonder what the difference between these two sets would be.

Kāyagatāsati refers to the *where* of mindfulness – that is, the place where mindfulness is established, namely, “in the body”. Kāya-*anupassanā* describes the *how* of mindfulness – that is, how mindfulness proceeds, namely, “body-contemplating”. After the first 14 exercises in M 119, the mindfulness “gone (into the) body” goes on to deal with the physical and mental phenomena that arise in states of deep meditation, but this *dealing with* does not occur in some “mental sphere”; it's still in the body. The discourse is very clear on this point.

In our case here, the Buddha does not expressly say that mindfulness continues to be established in the body, but at that time his listeners were almost all phenomenologists (even if nobody called them as such) and therefore such a remark would have been unnecessary. But as mentioned before, nowadays there are some popular “Buddhist” approaches out there ... and they consider the experience of body and the experience of feeling as being two fundamentally different things.

We, however, pick up our level-tool and understand that “feeling” and “body” can on one particular level be different and, at the same time, on a higher, more general level, be the same. We continue contemplating all the things that we have been contemplating up to now, but we do not pay attention to their respective peculiarities any more. We put them “in brackets” and pay attention to a more general quality, to something they all have in common: the aspect of feeling.

Feeling, sensing, experiencing

So, it's no longer about the pleasant, smooth breath; or about painful contortions of the body (full lotus!); or about the contemplation of elements – which leaves us emotionally quite cool; or about charnel ground contemplation, which ... well, as the case may be.

It's all about the immediate general quality of experience: pleasant, painful or neither-nor, i.e. neutral. To learn that neutral feeling is feeling too shows us that some kind of feeling is always present. The feeling-level is so general that it can almost be equated with experience itself: feeling and sensing (from the introductory quote) are derived from related word roots; these terms are used in the suttas as well-nigh synonyms of experience in general.

Only these three distinctions remain: pleasant, painful, neither-painful-nor-pleasant – and two categories: of the flesh or not of the flesh. Of the flesh is feeling in the context of the weal and woe of everyday life. Not of the flesh is feeling that doesn't arise before a certain maturity of the practice of concentration and wisdom has been attained. This distinction can therefore only be discerned when this maturity is present, otherwise not. Right: this maturity *is* the “higher level” on which we can compare. And this distinction is important, because there is no urge to passion, to resistance or to ignorance underlying this not of the flesh feeling. Whereas in the case of the flesh, there certainly is.

The “underlying urge or not” topic pushes the envelope of ordinary phenomenology. We will deal with this later in the context of specific conditionality and the eightfold path.

Whenever we turn towards the level of feeling, this doesn't mean that the body is “gone” at this point. It is still there, but it has been put “in brackets”, it doesn't interest us as such any more.

Well then, contemplation of feeling is more general than body-contemplation, and it is more subtle. It requires a sharper look, and more mental power in order to avoid being pulled back and once again, falling under the spell of all the details. If we can manage this,

contemplation of feeling provides us with more inner balance. We are no longer shaken by particularities as much, and we no longer react so impetuously (in unwholesome ways) to the pleasant and the unpleasant.

Is breath a feeling?

Here too we can unbox our hologram tool – the principle of *noticing*, *investigating*, *understanding*, *transcending*, which can be found everywhere and on all levels. On the “satipaṭṭhāna” level, contemplation of feeling would be referring to the second aspect, the deeper look, the getting to know with close attention.

We introduced the hologram principle in the context of breath-awareness. Now it might be interesting to see if and how this can be applied to the contemplation of feeling. The breath is a certain body among bodies, this we have heard already. Could the breath also be contemplated as a feeling? It should be so, if that level-thing is correct. Is the hologram also to be found *within* contemplation of feeling? It should be so, otherwise it wouldn't be a hologram!

Bhikkhus, on whatever occasion a bhikkhu trains thus: “I shall breathe in experiencing rapture”; trains thus: “I shall breathe out experiencing rapture”; trains thus: “I shall breathe in experiencing pleasure”; trains thus: “I shall breathe out experiencing pleasure”; trains thus: “I shall breathe in experiencing heart-determination”; trains thus: “I shall breathe out experiencing heart-determination”; trains thus: “I shall breathe in calming heart-determination”; trains thus: “I shall breathe out calming heart-determination” – on that occasion a bhikkhu abides with feelings feeling-contemplating ... I call this is a certain feeling among feelings, namely, close *attention** to the in-&out-breaths. That is why on that occasion a bhikkhu abides with feelings feeling-contemplating ...⁶³

So it is precisely this close, precise attention which lifts contemplation of the breath up to the higher level of the aspect of feeling. “Close attention” is what we referred to as “investigating” in our hologram model.

What’s it like *within* this contemplation of breath = feeling? Well, it first starts out with the experience of *rapture*, in Pāli *pīti*. This phenomenon only occurs when the heart is no longer lacking anything, when it is well on its way in the practice. Rapture is its *food* for the journey, its fare for the journey. The cause of rapture is first and foremost the collectedness of the heart, but it can also arise in moments of inspiration, or when important things suddenly become clear. It is the *pleasant* experience *not of the flesh*, par excellence.

In scholarly circles it is debated as to whether *pīti* would be classed as a feeling or a perception – or maybe a determination after all? Phenomenologically it’s neither here nor there, and for the successful practice of satipaṭṭhāna as well it’s completely beside the point. It is a *pleasant experience in/of body and mind without any underlying urge to passion*. Everything else is unimportant, and misses the salient point of it all. Besides: in *every* experience, feeling, perception and determinations are always present simultaneously.

What is the more general aspect of *pīti*, what do we experience when we take a closer look? *Pīti* is *pleasure*, it is a *pleasant* experience (in/of body and mind).

A yet more general level? The hologram “step” of the principle of understanding? What is feeling in general? It is a *heart-determination* that is being experienced here: feeling – together with perception – determines the state of the heart (see again M44).

The fourth aspect of the hologram is the transcending. Here: the *calming* of the determination. What “calming” of feeling really means has to be understood holistically too. There is not *the one* calming of the heart-determination – there are several (as with the calming of the body-determination), but on a higher level they all have something in common, namely the aspect of transcending. This could be

experienced as a decrease in intensity, or as a going beyond the ups and downs of pain and pleasure through equanimity, all the way on to the meditative attainment of the complete cessation of perception and feeling.ⁿ Or even the cessation of determinations in general that comes along with the cessation of (the origin of) suffering.

And why is the transcending (of determinations or of anything) on a higher level than the experiencing? That's our homework for today.

Coordinates of the Here

At the beginning of the book they said, no, we said ... well, I said: The knowing is not only *now*, it is also *here*.

Whenever we are travelling or moving from one place to another, it's just a perception happening in the moment: a perception of the car, a perception of the motorway, a perception of the towns passing by, or a perception of arriving somewhere. But wherever we go, it is always 'here'. Have any of us ever been in a place that was not 'here'? Wherever we've been during our entire life, it has always been exactly 'here'.

Therefore, when we remember that there is really nobody going anywhere – that there are only changing conditions of mind – it shifts our perspective on life. Even though we may be moving vigorously, driving or walking or running, when the mind remembers that it's all just happening 'here', there is a profound restfulness within the movement. A peacefulness. A sense of 'nobody going anywhere'.⁶⁴

Amaro Bhikkhu

ⁿ What has this state in common with the domain of neither-perception-nor-non-perception? Both are, even for arahants, no longer the object of any kind of phenomenology. This just in passing.

In the meantime we ... no, you, the readers, have learnt quite a bit, to enable us to work with this quote. Having occupied ourselves with various phenomenological tools, and having learnt something about the mind with all its images, we now know: “Here” is a multi-layered affair.

We can locate our Here in diverse ways, for example with the help of images of absent things. Most of us have at one time or another stood in front of an information board showing a street map or a hiker’s map. A map is an image of an image of a structure of many images. Looking at a map conjures up images of an absent landscape, at least in those knowledgeable people who are still able to read a map.

But we can also simply look around us and determine our Here with the help of the immediately seen landscape: right at this moment I am sitting here in my hut writing these lines. We remember: by the senses one is *in the world* a perceiver of the world ... And the senses *are* the world. By the senses we are the *centre* of the world, that is, *here*.

We could look at this in an even stricter way, and say: “The body as the *bearer* of the senses is the Here.”

But in this chapter we have established that *the* body as a solid fact does not even exist. It depends on how we look at it, on which level of generalisation we are contemplating. This is what determines “where” in the experience of the Here, here actually is!

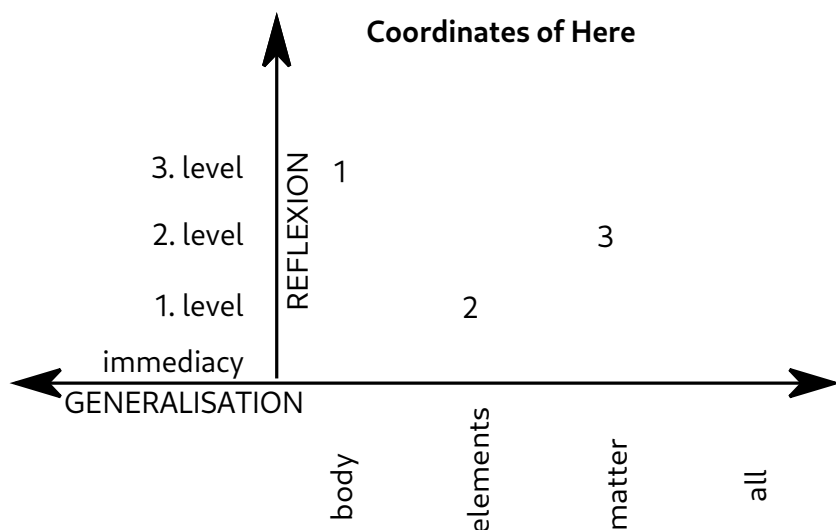
And we have also occupied ourselves with the insight that immediate experience comes via the five senses – “here, the body” – and a reflexive re-duplication in the mind, whenever we apply mindfulness: “Aha, I am here in the body.”

But that’s not the end of the story, because we are not limited to simply being mindful, we can also notice that we are being mindful: “Aha, I am aware that I am here in the body.” Or, moving up to the next level, another even higher level: “Aha, I know that I am aware that I am here in the body.” And so on.

This is another hierarchy of levels of experience. But in contrast to the levels of generalisation (... foliage – tree – forest – landscape – earth element ...), which extend in both directions, the “stack” of reflexive mirroring or re-duplications extends only in one direction, away from immediacy, from the immediate five-sense experience. In the “The End of Satipaṭṭhāna” chapter I said that self-awareness operates from a higher level. Now we can express this more precisely: it operates from many higher levels.

Where we are, what our *Here* is, depends on a particular factor that was mentioned previously: attention. This attention – what we are attentive to – determines where our Here finds its place on the map grid of the double hierarchy.

So, this “Here” is not an objective fact, but rather a complex structural affair, which depends on the experiencer: depends on the way and mode of experiencing. Perhaps by now we might have the uneasy feeling that the same could hold true for the “Now”?



Here 1: „Aha, I know that I am aware that I am here in the body.“

Here 2: „Aha, I am here in a heap of elements.“

Here 3: „Aha, I am aware that I am here in matter.“

Of course this map grid here is just a philosophical gimmick. And is primarily meant to show that our experiencing is a multi-layered *structure* and not a linear sequence of components. Why this is so important will become very clear in the next chapter.

Instead of “body-elements-matter-all”, this pattern can be used to depict even longer lines of generalisation, lines that have nothing to do with the Here. For instance I could be attentive to the letters of this word, or to the words in this sentence, or to this sentence in the context of the whole paragraph, or to this paragraph being subordinate to this chapter and so on. Then I could be aware that I am being attentive in a certain way and so on. In an experience as complex as “written text” it is basically impossible to remain on the immediate level unless one is illiterate.

It’s better if we now return to our information board with the hiker’s map. Somewhere there’s a red dot on that map with a label next to it: “Vous êtes *ici* ! You are *here*! Sie sind *hier*!” The red dot is quite worn-out, because so many people touch it with their index finger, pointing at it.

Well, wait a minute! If I can *point to* something (e.g. a point) then this something is not here at all, it’s *over there*! Then I am not where the dot is; I am in a Here, which starts somewhere at the shoulder joint and ... Oh well, in the moment when I turn my attention to the shoulder joint, it too becomes “over there” and the “I-here” escapes to somewhere else yet again.

This escape looks familiar to us. We already encountered it when we tried to see through the identification with body parts or with the elements. We can’t prevent this *fleeing* and can not even really understand it at this point. But we might be able to observe the fact that despite of all this, we somehow want there to be an “I-here” that

points to a “world over there”. This wanting is an unsolicited ingredient. At the very least, one would reject it with indignation if someone (like me) were to come along and claim that one *wants* this wanting without even knowing it.

We addressed the arbitrariness of Here and There, as well as the urge to identify with something, in the supramundane *preview* in Part 1. The craving to be is the cause. This is valid for “internally and externally” as well as for “here and over there”.

The *profound restfulness within the movement* that Ācān Amaro is talking of, the *peacefulness*, the *sense of ‘nobody going anywhere’* – this is something that is still very relative. Certainly it is of benefit to “dwell in the here&now”. To be sure, the body is always here and now; the question is whether the mind can join it, or if it prefers to dwell in the absent instead – absent-mindedly.

Moreover, to be “here” can also be a damn painful thing. We all know the “place” of grief, of loneliness, of “righteous” anger, of lack, of greed. We know a Here which is too tight, and a Here in which we lose ourselves.

The problem of my being-there is not solved by “arriving” here. I am *originally* here, and point to the yonder because *I am there*. But if this has an origin, then there is also a cessation:

When for you, Bāhiya, in the seen there will be just the seen, in the heard there will be just the heard, in the sensed there will be just the sensed, in the cognized there will be just the cognized, then, Bāhiya, you are not by that (or: that by which); and when, Bāhiya, you are not by that, then, Bāhiya, you are not *there*; and when, Bāhiya, you are not *there*, then, Bāhiya, you are *neither here nor yonder* nor between the two – just this is the end of suffering.⁶⁵

But how to do this? Let's come back "here" once more, into the body, back to the place where mindfulness is established in order to *penetrate* and *analyse*. Mindfulness-merged-in-the-body or, more literally, "mindfulness (of things) gone body" or mindfulness of "how it goes with the body", is our tool here:

Bhikkhus, for whomever the great ocean is encompassed with the heart, for this one, whatever streams run into the ocean, they are included; in the same way, for whomever mindfulness-merged-in-the-body is developed and cultivated, for this one, whatever wholesome things pertain to *true knowing*^{*}, they are included.

Bhikkhus, when one thing is developed and cultivated, it leads to the breakthrough of wisdom, to final Nibbāna free from taking-up ... In one thing, when developed and cultivated, there is the *penetration* of many different properties, the *analysis* of many properties ... When one thing is developed and cultivated, it leads to the realisation of the fruit of stream-entry, of the once-returner, of the non-returner, of arahantship.⁶⁶ What is that one thing? Mindfulness-merged-in-the-body.⁶⁷

A 1.⁶⁸

Why would this shoddy body deserve so much attention?

"Friend, where one does not come into the world, does not age, does not die, does not pass away, does not arise – that end of the world – one cannot know, see, or reach it by travelling," I say. And I say that without having reached the end of the world there is no end-making of suffering. But, friend, in this fathom-long body endowed with perception and mind I proclaim the world, the origin of the world, the cessation of the world, and the practice leading to the cessation of the world.⁶⁹

A 4. 45

From the objective, scientific standpoint this is completely incomprehensible: “All galaxies in this body? Utter nonsense!” Phenomenologically on the other hand, we can clearly relate to it: The world is not out there, but in the body as the bearer of the senses.

However, that the cessation of the world, the cessation of being-there, of being here&yonder, and the end of suffering should be *in the body* – this we can’t yet understand. Self-contemplation as a tool is not sufficient here, because – as we have seen – the “observer” always “retreats” to a higher, relatively timeless, relatively permanent and seemingly independent level.

Nevertheless, we will yet again borrow a few effective tools from phenomenology: thereafter we can take up more potent weapons. But before we obtain such a weapon against ignorance, we first need one against foolishness.

The Discourse – *Contemplation of the heart*

And how, bhikkhus, does a bhikkhu abide with the *heart** heart-contemplating? Here a bhikkhu understands a heart with passion: ‘The heart is with passion.’ Or he understands a heart without passion: ‘The heart is without passion.’ Or he understands a heart with hatred: ‘The heart is with hatred.’ Or he understands a heart without hatred: ‘The heart is without hatred.’ Or he understands a heart with delusion: ‘The heart is with delusion.’ Or he understands a heart without delusion: ‘The heart is without delusion.’ Or he understands a *collected** heart: ‘The heart is collected.’ Or he understands a scattered heart: ‘The heart is scattered.’ Or he understands an *expanded** heart: ‘The heart is expanded.’ Or he understands a not expanded heart: ‘The heart is not expanded.’ Or he understands a *surpassed** heart: ‘The heart is surpassed.’ Or he understands an unsurpassed heart: ‘The heart is unsurpassed.’ Or he understands a concentrated heart: ‘The heart is concentrated.’ Or he understands an unconcentrated heart: ‘The heart is unconcentrated.’ Or he understands a liberated heart: ‘The heart is liberated.’ Or he understands an unliberated heart: ‘The heart is unliberated.’

In this way he abides internally with the heart heart-contemplating, or he abides externally with the heart heart-contemplating, or he abides internally&externally with the heart heart-contemplating. Or else contemplating as a thing of origin he abides with the heart, or contemplating as a thing of passing-away he abides with the heart, or contemplating as a thing of origin&passing-away he abides with the heart. Or else ‘there is heart’ mindfulness is present for him, just for the right measure of knowing and against-the-grain mindfulness. And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with the heart heart-contemplating.

4. When is Now?

We don't want to waste time beating about the bush here! Let's face the two big questions head on:

1. Does contemplation of the heart take place *in the body* too?
2. What about the levels and the hologram?

Heart-contemplation takes place abiding *with the heart*. But the contemplating observer is here, in the body, now as before.^o Our language makes use of a number of allegorical idioms that point to the fact that mental states manifest in the body: hatred makes the blood boil, stress upsets the stomach, annoyance gives us a pain in the neck (or arse), grief eats out the heart, one is head over heels in love ... But this is only a secondary consideration.

Actually it is all about experiencing the place where we are. While contemplating feeling we have already put the experience of the body "in brackets" so to speak, only attending to the more general aspects. Now all of this is experienced from/on an even higher level.

This becomes clearer when we once again take the breath by way of example. First we *noticed* the breath as a certain body, then we *investigated* it under the aspect of feeling; and now: *fully aware* we *understand* the regularities and principles of the heart in the breath.

Bhikkhus, on whatever occasion a bhikkhu trains thus: "I shall breathe in as *one who is able to experience the heart*"; trains thus: "I shall breathe out as one who is able to experience the heart"; trains thus: "I shall breathe in gladdening the heart"; trains thus: "I shall breathe out gladdening the heart"; trains thus: "I shall breathe in concentrating the heart"; trains thus: "I shall breathe out concentrating the heart"; trains thus: "I shall breathe in liberating the heart"; trains thus: "I shall breathe out liberating the heart" – on that occasion a bhikkhu abides with the heart as *one who is able to contemplate the heart** ... I do not say that there is mindful-

^o This changes only in higher meditative states: the formless attainments.

ness of the in-&out-breaths for one with neglected mindfulness, who is not fully aware. That is why on that occasion a bhikkhu abides with the heart as one who is able to contemplate the heart ...⁷⁰

M 118

Readers who have internalised the level-tool well may submit for consideration that feeling as a “heart-determination”, must in fact be more general than “heart” and therefore stand on a higher level. Should heart-contemplation therefore not come *before* feeling-contemplation?

A point well taken! But “heart” is a multi-layered affair in and of itself. The pleasant feeling that, for example, arises with the calm breath, does indeed determine a specific state of the heart, a state of ease. Here, however, we are dealing with more general states, states which are attained through a practice that is progressing on a higher level through mindfulness and full awareness: and precisely *not* through a specific feeling that arises due to an even more specific experience of the body. These more general states are: gladdening, concentration, and liberation of the heart.

Here we meet the aforementioned *self-contemplation* from a higher level again. Or, in other words: “What is it that experiences, gladdens, concentrates and liberates the heart?” The heart, of course, but simply from a higher level.

Now for the hologram: the hologram steps of the heart-contemplation hologram are all located on a higher level of the satipaṭṭhāna hologram. They have a higher degree of difficulty so to speak. To practise as *one who is able to contemplate the heart*, is to practice in the way of the advanced practitioners. Even if they *understand a scattered heart*, the heart is probably not quite as scattered as would usually be the case.

Within satipaṭṭhāna, heart-contemplation – following on from *noticing* (body-contemplation) and *investigating* (feeling-contemplation) – is the third aspect or step: *understanding*.

Within heart-contemplation we have: 1. Being able to experience the heart – this ability is necessary for *noticing*; 2. Gladdening the heart – this comes about precisely through becoming acquainted with the heart by means of *investigating*; 3. Concentrating the heart – this can only take place if an *understanding* of the conditions of the heart is present; and 4. Liberating the heart = *transcending*.

As before, when we considered breath=body and breath=feeling, here too with breath=heart, *transcending* must be understood holistically, in accordance with the hologram principle. This transcending may refer to a temporary liberation from the inner hindrances found in states of concentration, or to a stepwise progressing liberation from the fetters of being, all the way up to the removal of the origin of suffering, that is, liberation from all suffering.

Just a moment!

So, due to the hierarchical structure of experience the heart can therefore be more general than a specific feeling. For readers who have made it up to this point, this should no longer pose a problem. The idea of a heart that experiences itself from a higher level is no longer alien to us either. We could even ask ourselves whether heart-contemplation isn't always to be understood phenomenologically – automatically, by its very nature.

Unfortunately this is not the case. The composers of commentarial literature have put the “objectivity” screws on precisely this topic, one that concerns itself with cognitive structures, i.e. on gaining cognizance, and on experience itself. There is a widespread model that throws the terms “mind” (*mano*), “heart” (*citta*) and “consciousness” (*viññāṇa*) all together into the same pot, conceiving that they function as a linear succession of “moments”. This idea has far-reaching implications, and an impact on important questions, such as: “What is time?”, “What is change?”, “What is impermanence?”

“All determinations are impermanent” – when one sees this with wisdom, one turns away from suffering. This is the path to purification.⁷¹

Dhp 277

Perception of impermanence plays a key role on the path to liberation. The Buddha made this clear to his son Rāhula in the previous chapter on decomposition. But where is the problem? We all perceive change and impermanence, don't we? The days come and go, the sun shines, rain falls, snow melts, and the bank account ebbs and flows. We do see that. And maybe in weaker moments we even intuit that one day we will, um, well ... so to say, die! So, why then are we not yet liberated? Do we not see impermanence correctly? Well, how should we see it?

The second last question seems to require an answer in the affirmative: “Yes, that's right, we do not see impermanence correctly!” Concerning the last question, there are three kinds of answers which correspond to the three types of world view, as discussed at the outset of this book. I will only touch briefly on the two unfit for purpose approaches, and forgo a waterproof rebuttal of them as previously announced in the foreword.^p

Not in their wildest dreams, would it occur to Buddhist scholars with all their “objective” views, that their failure to see impermanence in a way apt for liberation could have anything to do with themselves, as experiencing living beings. Their exegetical model looks something like this:

“Time *consists of* a series of indivisible *moments* – atoms of time, as it were – within which no change takes place. Those moments come and go so rapidly that we mistakenly get the impression of permanence. But according to *ultimate reality* matter arises and passes away 176 billion times for every blink of the eye. And the mind which experiences matter, arises and passes away sixteen times faster than

p More detailed discussion of such erroneous models can be found in the writings of Bhikkhu Ñāṇavīra and Sāmaṇera Bodhesako.

that. *Ordinary* changes – sun/rain, diarrhoea/constipation – are not real in the sense of *absolute truth*, and are of no relevance to the path to liberation. Only one who can see the arising and passing away of such mind moments and matter moments can perceive impermanence correctly.”

This model of mind moments, sometimes called *cittavīthi* in commentarial literature, doesn’t know the levels of generalisation. In it, change happens in a linear fashion, and all moments are of the same length. Exegetes of the mind moment model further elucidate:

“The chain or sequence of moments can be compared to a filmstrip consisting of separate frames. These frames pass in front of the projector lamp so quickly that the illusion of a continuity of moving – but enduring – objects or persons is created. In reality there is nothing enduring to be found here, just the coming and going of separate single pictures. In reality there is nothing real at all.”^q

Although *cittavīthi* is merely a scholarly invention, there are actually some meditation systems that try to track down such moments. Their adherents can be recognised by their style of walking meditation, which is done in ultra slow-motion, and the fact that they generally do everything veeeeeery sloooooowly. With 16 times 17.6 times 10⁹ moments for every blink of the eye, they have set themselves quite a task!

We pheno-Buddhists pose a few questions instead: “How can the mind in one of these filmstrip frames know anything of the previous frame if that frame disappears before the next one arises? How can the mind know anything at all, if within the mind moments there is nothing happening? Don’t the mind moments just come apart and roll around all over the place?”

q This simile is just for those who still remember what a filmstrip is. Future editions of this book will probably require some modification here. But commentary oriented adepts of Buddhism will face the same problem. (This pending modification is a more down-to-earth example of *change*).

The inventors of cittavīthi have dealt with such questions too. They thought up a kind of *putty* with which to keep the mind moments together (and mend the intellectual cracks in the system): namely *bhavaṅgasota*, which literally means, “the stream of the factors of being”. One translator of texts on this very topic used the term “the stream of subconsciousness” – in full accordance with the *zeitgeist* of his time.

This model is meant to serve as a means to view time, change and impermanence *objectively from the outside*. Time is considered a continuum *within which* everything is happening. But this begs the question: “*From where* – if different levels are excluded – are we supposed to view this time and the mind moments contained therein? From which ‘outside’?”

Apart from the fact that this model doesn’t help in overcoming a personal problem – namely suffering – if we try to proceed objectively, it can also be a health hazard! If we cultivate and internalise this attitude of being separated from ourselves to an intense degree, if we assume that we have “nothing to do” with the processes in our own mind, then we expose ourselves to a heightened risk of psychosis. I am neither a psychiatrist nor a therapist, but in my practice of giving spiritual care I have time and again encountered people who all of a sudden are faced with a riddle in their meditation practice: “If all these inner things are just soulless mental processes ‘out there’, then I am not the one who causes them at all. So then, *who* does cause them?”

Down the drain

This mind moment theory is not the only attempt at explaining change and impermanence. Very often we come across certain ideas like the following:

“Everything is flowing. Everything is constantly changing. Everything is in a state of flux.”

The image of the “river of constant change” sounds less dry than that thing with the mind moments. It comes across as very profound and wise. That’s why it is so popular among “spiritual” people: even among many Buddhists. Perhaps – at least in an unexpressed and unaddressed, that is, unreflective way – by most of them.

There is no bean counting of moments here! On the contrary, it’s all about merging into oneness, being in tune with the Great Cosmic Order, according to which nothing lasts, not even for a moment: everything is just constantly flowing and “fluxing” along.

Ideas like this sell better than phenomenology, that’s for sure. But they taste a bit of idealism: for if nothing endures, not even for a moment, then nothing *really* exists. And here, indeed, the one extreme of idealism meets the other extreme of the objective approach.

One type of change is a change of location, in other words, movement. Flowing is a change of location. Therefore, the image of a river is intuitively accessible, illustrating nicely how change works in general. The crucial point however, is to gain cognizance directly from the phenomenon “flowing”, instead of jamming it into the drawers of preconceived idealist ideas.

Once I sat on the banks of a very clear, fast flowing river. It was so crystal clear that I couldn’t really see the movement of the water. It only became visible when a beech leaf floated by and cast its shadow onto the river bed; the shadow glided over the pebbles. Relative to the current of the water the leaf did not change its position at all; it was together with the water, in the river, in the flow. Then the thought occurred to me: “If the river bed and the river banks (including myself sitting there) were also ‘in the river’, in the flow, flowing along together with the water, then no movement at all would actually take place.”

Once more we pose the question to idealism: “Everything is constantly changing? *Compared to what?*” If *everything* is changing *all the time*, then no change at all is taking place. The idea that

everything is constantly moving just flows along down to a dead-end. The only way that everything can be in the river of constant change, is when it has previously gone down the drain.

The concept of flux and flow is dear to many people. It is so deeply engrained in our bhavaṅgasota (or what ever), that it is difficult to debunk this myth.

During a talk on this topic that I gave a couple of years ago, one of my fellow monks present, raised the following objection: “Well, on a subatomic level you are constantly moving!” This was meant as an argument *in support* of the theory of flux, as a kind of scientific proof of an idealistic position, so to speak. But it is actually a clear contradiction in terms, a counter-argument to this position: if everything is in flux, there are no levels at all, not even subatomic ones.^r

Change of the standing

In the charnel chapter I mentioned that perception of impermanence is a specific type of comparing: the comparison of the before and after. In order to see change at all, we need a higher level. A level that the before and after have in common, and on which there is no difference, no change taking place. In other words, in order to be able to say, “this has changed,” two things are necessary:

1. Something that changes – otherwise we could not say, “this has changed”.

Any change has to be discontinuous. We could also call it “discrete” or “complete”. Either something is *so* or it is *otherwise*. If we said, “it is no longer fully so, but not yet otherwise” or “it is almost other-

r One branch of physics that deals with such phenomena is quantum physics. Its point of departure is that change (also and *especially* on subatomic levels) does not take place through a continuous state of flux, but rather in discontinuous steps – those famous quantum leaps. But since any attempts to strengthen the Buddha’s authority with the aid of scientific arguments are somewhat distasteful, this remark only attained the humble status of a footnote.

wise,” then something is wrong with our perception and/or our understanding. At any rate, it is not a phenomenological description of change. Or rather, it is not a description of change at all, not even of flux. It is plain nonsense.

2. Something that remains the same – otherwise we could not say, “*this* has changed”.

If we look around us we will normally see more things that are not changing than things that are changing. When I pause from typing these words only the blinking cursor on the screen changes. But that does not mean that the rest of the screen is permanent or eternal. It is just that it does not change while I have paused my typing.

If we take these two conditions for change together, we arrive at a further attribute of change, namely, that change *must* take place (sooner or later), even if there is no change apparent right now. It is this combination of certainty and uncertainty that constitutes the nature of change. Charnel ground!

So, impermanence does not mean that everything just arises and passes away. Things do endure, stand, have a lifespan, even if at the same time they are changing on a lower or subordinate level, that is, they have subordinate, more specific things or aspects that are coming and going. Whether we contemplate that which is enduring or changing or arising/passing-away depends on the focus of our attention.

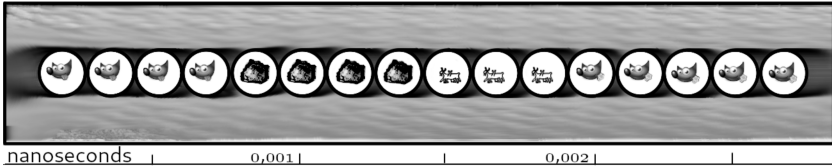
Bhikkhus, there are these three determined-characteristics of the determined. Which three? *Arising* is discerned; *passing-away* is discerned; *change of the standing* is discerned. These, bhikkhus, are the three determined-characteristics of the determined.⁷²

A 3.47

Let’s contemplate a leaf in the forest. In spring it *arises*; then it *stands* or endures as a leaf, until it falls off in autumn and disintegrates, it *passes away*. During its enduring, its lifespan as a leaf, it *changes*.

Three models of change

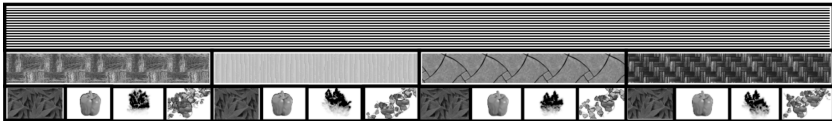
mind moments



flux



structure



Light green colour comes and goes, then dark green comes and goes, then yellow, red, brown. But we can only say, “*the leaf* has changed,” because the leaf does not arise and pass away in the meantime. That which arises and passes away – the different shades of colour – takes place on a lower, subordinate, more specific level.

The model that such a hierarchical structure of levels provides, meets the requirements of impermanence as described in the sutta quote above. It is suitable for describing change on every level, yes, even right down to the subatomic one. On each level there is coming and going; on the respective level above it, there is change of the standing; on another level further up in the hierarchy, there is no change – at that time. It will only become apparent when we “move higher up” the hierarchy of levels in our contemplation.

The foliage of a tree passes away in winter, arises in spring. While the foliage arises and passes away, the same standing tree changes: first it is bare, then it is leafy. But it remains the same tree. The forest remains the same forest, and as such it does not even change with the coming and going of foliage. It changes with the arising and passing away of trees.

The mind moments model doesn't know anything about *change of the standing*, because there is nothing standing. Particular schools of meditation – the slow-motion yogis for one – practise along a neat system of “insight stages”. One of these stages, promulgated as the “knowledge of arising and passing away”, is allegedly attained by the yogi, when he merely perceives arising and passing away, when he sees that “everything just arises and passes away”. This state is celebrated as a great accomplishment. It is considered the half-way marker on the path to the realisation of the Dhamma, that is, of stream-entry.

I do, however, wonder what there is to celebrate. When the yogi does not see change of the standing any more, that simply means that he has stretched his mindfulness too thinly, he has overwhelmed his capacity for observation. He has contemplated on an all too specific level; the coming and going further down the ladder is simply beyond his threshold of perception. That means that what he is contemplating he cannot see as an impermanent *standing* thing any more. Or else his attention has become stuck on a certain level and blocked out any superordinate aspects present on a higher level, that at that time are not changing.

If due to some kind of theoretical learning we already know in advance what it is we are supposed to “see” in meditation, in order to earn the accolades and decorations that that particular system grants us, then we *will* see it. Attention can be directed. Imagination is a function of the mind. But having attention go off the rails is truly no achievement at all, no reason to celebrate.

Far be it for me to be polemical towards the adepts of certain traditions, but I do wish to point out clearly that we are better off when

we do not try to be cleverer than the Buddha who has stated unambiguously that *change of the standing* is a characteristic of all that is determined.

Let's return to our levels, and take another glance at the table on page 89. According to this table, we could express the connection between “change of the standing” and “coming&going” in a different way again:

The forest is the background for the tree. Seen from the tree's perspective the forest is eternal. No one particular tree can ever experience the death of the forest. The forest is the purpose of life for the tree. If there were no forest, there couldn't be any tree in it. One more example:

A song is a sequence of notes of defined intervals. The notes change, but the song (which is the context within which the notes are characterized) remains the same song until it is finished ...

But at any level the change is total: what is ceases to be and is replaced by something else, or by nothing else. But on the next higher level there is no change at all: what is remains what it is until it ceases to be what it is. If the song is part of a more general performance then we can say that though the song has ended and another has begun there is still the same concert, for the concert is the background to the songs. The note is finished but the melody lingers on. The song is over but the concert continues. The concert is concluded but there is still the fog end of the evening to go.⁷³

Sāmañera Bodhesako

Change does not depend on a postulated “passage of time”, it does not take place *in* time. Let us instead try to understand time as a structural *property of things*: as their *nature*.

This should suffice for now. The topic of impermanence has not yet been exhausted by any means, but as an interim résumé we can keep the following in mind:

We are better off leaving concepts such as “how everything is” alone for now. Let’s just stay with the learning that comes from phenomena directly, from our experience in the present moment. And this now leads us on to another exciting question:

How long is the present moment?

Cittavīthi says: “The present moment? Whoosh, it’s gone!” These hypothetical “moments” are so extremely short-lived, that one might wonder how it should be possible to experience anything in the present at all.

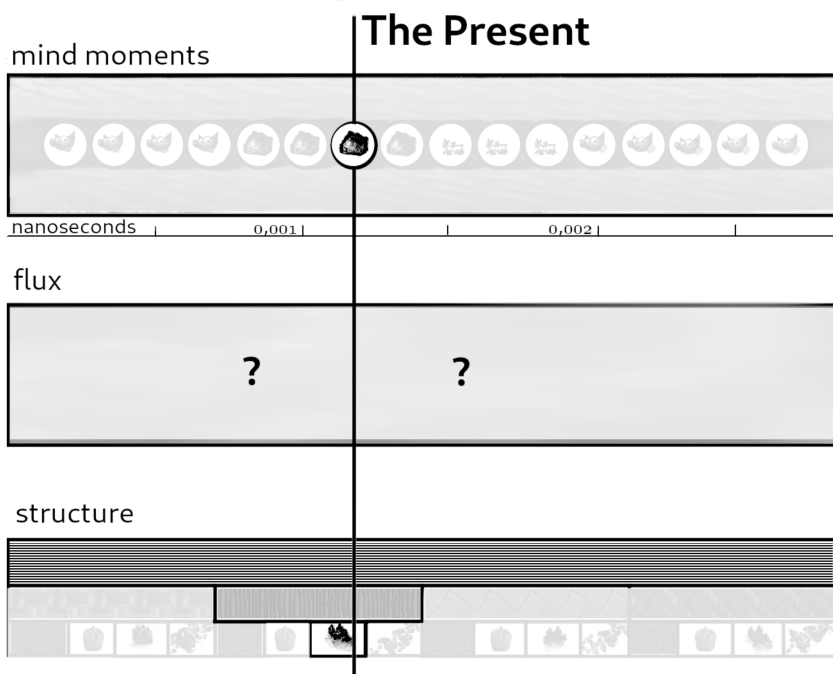
The fluxers won’t be able to contribute anything particularly meaningful concerning the present if they want to remain true to their somewhat hazy ideas. It would probably amount to some kind of “forever wafting Now”. For if there is no single discrete change, as their claim that “*everything is constantly changing*” implies, there can’t be any reference point for the Now.

So, then how long does the present moment last according to Buddho-phenomenology? Answer: “Until it comes to an end!”

A moment has come to an end when a change occurs. This occurrence, we have hopefully understood by now, depends on what we are being attentive to.

At the moment the trees are green. This moment will be over in the golden month of October. At the moment I live in a spruce forest. If the bark beetle goes on as it has been doing over the last few years, this moment will be over within another decade or so. At the moment I am typing out this manuscript. This moment will be over in a few seconds, because now I am going to have a tea break.

[SLURP]



How long “the present” lasts depends upon our perspective. It is for this reason that in common language there is quite properly a plasticity in the scope of the word “now.”

The present can mean this very second (the nick of time), today (“What a difference a day makes ...”), a season (“Summertime, and the livin’ is easy ...”), or even the last million years or so (“In comparison with the Tertiary period, then, the Pleistocene is marked by...”). How long “now” lasts depends on its context, and context is a matter of perspective.⁷⁴

Sāmañera Bodhesako

Nevertheless many people have internalised the idea of the present as being a *point* in time within the “flow of time” to such an extent that it goes against the grain for them to accept that the present may occasionally last a bit longer. What does the Buddha say to this?

Bhikkhus, there are these three periods. Which three?
 The past period, the future period, the present *period*.
 These, bhikkhus, are the three periods.⁷⁵

Iti 63

The Buddha takes away some of the distinguished status that the present moment enjoys in much of contemporary Buddhist thought. Of course, *now* is the knowing, but the object of knowing is not limited to the present. The future is not a hallucination and the past is not as dead as some people would have it.

The past is not non-existent! It is *there*, but *no longer here*. It is *already yonder* or absent. It has *gone* by (Pāli: atīta [ati+ita], German: *ver-gangen*).

The future is not non-existent! It is *there*, but *not yet here*. It is *still yonder* or absent. It has *not yet arrived* (Pāli: an-āgata), but it is approaching (German: *zu-künftig*).

The present is what is *presented*. It is also what is *presenting*, making something (a) present – something to receive, perceive, conceive. It offers resistance in immediate experience (it has “arisen-against”, Pāli: paccuppanna [paṭi+uppanna], German: *gegen-wärtig*).

With this understanding, our idea of time and change changes. Time is not something within which everything is happening, within which things change, but rather it is change itself that determines the experience of time. For example, we can't really in actuality measure time, we are merely counting instances of change. That's the way all the different kinds of clocks work. They do not measure time, they just count the to-and-fro motion of a pendulum, the vibrations of quartz crystals or subatomic processes (here we've got them again).

The relative nature of time can be observed especially well when the heart is in a concentrated calm state. With the deepening of concentration our internal clock changes. Its wavelength increases, the “feeling” of time changes: eternities become moments.

When we understand time as a structure of hierarchical levels, the question as to how the remembering of something that is past can be possible doesn't puzzle us so much any more. We can then forgo attempts at explanations that are not phenomenologically accessible. No need to speak of "tapping into the cosmic quantum consciousness" or "leafing through the Ākāśa chronicles". What is past is still there, but it is over-determined, which means, we cannot influence it any longer.

What is future is already there, but it is under-determined, which means a certain direction is given according to causes and conditions already present, but there are still multiple possibilities and subordinate directions waiting for development. This says something about the phenomenon of precognition, a glimpse of the future. Even the Buddha, who with his omniscient mind certainly knew more causes for future courses of events than anyone else, rarely gave definitive statements about such events. The majority of his predictions were of the "if – then" type: "If this person goes on like this then they will go to hell."

If our practice only took place *now*, then we would have to constantly repeat our mistakes and would not be able to learn from them. We need to be able to compare before and now.

And we would not be able to set a direction for our practice because we would not have an image of the future and we would not be able to apply what we have learnt. We need to be able to compare now and after.

People who don't see clearly for themselves the mass of suffering in the present, past and future must clearly bring the three times onto the same level for themselves, then they may possibly be able to reduce the delight in saṃsāra.

Within the field of the Buddha's teaching, it cannot be said that the past and the future themselves are of no particular value. Useful things from the past can be

used as examples on the right path. From that which is useless comes a lesson for what is to be avoided. Even with good intentions for the future, we prepare and preserve the useful – and the useless we avoid. For example, when we walk, even if we haven't taken a step yet, we need to see in advance where we are going, where we are stepping.⁷⁶

Khemapatto Bhikkhu (Luang Pū Lā)

Does it matter?

“Okay then,” one could say, “the theory that time consists of moments, and the concept of universal flux do have their shortcomings. What of it! Does it even matter what our idea of time is?”

The notion of time being external to phenomena, of things existing in time, brings us back to the search for some basic essence (“Time is Nature’s way of preventing everything from happening all at once.”) which is simultaneously both within and outside the range of human experience. Such a model is not merely suppositions but pernicious.⁷⁷

Sāmañera Bodhesako

“Oh really! How can a false idea or concept of time and change be somehow pernicious?”

Everyone would agree that a true understanding of impermanence leads to disenchantment and subsequently to letting go, the abandoning of all taking-up. It is important to understand how this works.

Whatever has become, is determined, intended, dependent co-arisen, that is impermanent. *What is impermanent, that is suffering.* What is suffering, that is clearly seen according to reality with right wisdom thus: “This is not mine, this one I am not, this one is not my self.”⁷⁸

A 10.93

Both the “objective” and the idealist concepts of time leave out something very important, but which is essential for realisation, disenchantment and withdrawal: the connection between impermanence and suffering. The “constant arising and passing away” of everything, even if 176 billion times per blink of the eye, may be impressively fast, but it does not hurt! What would be painful about it? Why would it lead us to disenchantment?

Even if we observe something that changes at a slower pace, the breath for instance, we won’t derive any sobering effect from it either if we only see that the breath is *constantly* coming and going. Besides, this is not a contemplation of inconstancy, but rather of constancy. Only once we see that the breath will one day, in the uncertain distant (or not so distant?) future, *no longer* come and go – well, that would bother us indeed. That would be suffering. And yes, that is indeed contemplation of impermanence.

The suffering of impermanence comes from precisely this combination of certainty and uncertainty. Contemplation of a steady and thus constant coming and going only displays certainty.

The same holds true for the wafting theory. Universal flux has something comforting about it: everything just flows along and away, how wonderful! “Cuddly” ideas such as these likewise leave out the aspect of suffering. What can actually pull us out of our “spiritual” complacency are the sudden, abrupt, discontinuous changes. And the right, the middle view tells us: *all* changes are like this.

The suffering of impermanence is this very disjointedness, this suddenness, this jerkiness of change. Flux doesn’t know any sudden changes. Actually, flux doesn’t know – as I have tried to point out – *any* change.

Another way to describe the perniciousness of those wrong ideas (the various points mentioned are actually just different aspects of the same dilemma) is this:

Concepts of “linear” time or of “flowing” time (= no time at all) in which everything is happening, exclude any understanding of relat-

ive timelessness, or better: non-temporality. We then see everything just arising and passing away, down to the smallest detail, and still wonder why the “observer” of all of this appears so permanent, so “eternal”. That is, only if we are so fortunate as to have enough wisdom, we may wonder. If however, we have internalised the scholastic, objective view very strongly, we won’t even notice the observer. And then there is nothing to wonder about.⁷⁹

So, we need an approach that combines certainty and uncertainty, includes discontinuous discrete change, and allows things after their arising to endure and change for a while. Our phenomenal tool, the level-lever offers us this, and can thus lever the dilemma out.

Without allowing for hierarchical levels of experience it is impossible to understand the *nature* of impermanence and change of things. There will be no understanding of the nature *of things*. There will be no understanding of dependent co-arising, which is a specific, special conditionality, a special aspect of the nature of things.

This special conditionality is difficult to see – as we can already see. Good philosophy does not guarantee insight, but bad philosophy guarantees that any attempt to gain insight will be defeated.

The Discourse - *Contemplation of things*

And how, bhikkhus, does a bhikkhu abide with things thing-contemplating? Here a bhikkhu abides with things thing-contemplating in terms of the five *hindrances**. And how does a bhikkhu abide with things thing-contemplating in terms of the five hindrances? Here, *wishing-will** being internally present, a bhikkhu understands: 'Wishing-will is internally present for me'; or wishing-will not being internally present, he understands: 'Wishing-will is not internally present for me.' And how there is the arising of unarisen wishing-will, and how there is the abandoning of arisen wishing-will, and how there is the future non-arising of abandoned wishing-will, that he also understands. Or, ill will ... sloth&torpor ... restlessness&remorse ... doubt being internally present, he understands: 'Ill will ... Sloth&torpor ... Restlessness&remorse ... Doubt is internally present for me'; or ill will ... sloth&torpor ... restlessness&remorse ... doubt not being internally present, he understands: 'Ill will ... Sloth&torpor ... Restlessness&remorse ... Doubt is not internally present for me.' And how there is the arising of unarisen ill will ... sloth&torpor ... restlessness&remorse ... doubt, and how there is the abandoning of arisen ill will ... sloth&torpor ... restlessness&remorse ... doubt, and how there is the future non-arising of abandoned ill will ... sloth&torpor ... restlessness&remorse ... doubt, that he also understands.

In this way he abides internally with things thing-contemplating, or he abides externally with things thing-contemplating, or he abides internally&externally with things thing-contemplating. Or else contemplating as things of origin he abides with things, or contemplating as things of passing-away he abides with things, or contemplating as things of origin&passing-away he abides with things. Or else 'there is things' mindfulness is present for him, just for the right measure of knowing and against-the-grain mindfulness. And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with things thing-contemplating in terms of the five hindrances.

5. What are Things?

In the course of our practice on the first three application-bases of mindfulness we have been able to observe that the practice of satipaṭṭhāna has become increasingly subtler: proceeding on towards deeper “grounds” – or rather, backgrounds. It has led us away from a concrete specific case, and on towards connections and principles. This in itself is a principle that we try to express through aids to understanding such as the level-tool or the hologram model.

Starting out with the coarse in- and out-breath we contemplated things of the body in (or with) the body. And then we moved on to more general aspects which go against the grain of inauthentic ways of life, as well as unawakened wishful thinking: the lack of solidity, the lack of personality, the lack of immortality.

After that, the specific things in the body were not of interest to us any more, and we turned our attention to the common denominator: the things of feeling. We investigated whether the experience is pleasant, painful or neutral – *neutral* meaning “neither-nor” (lat.: *neuter*), not “without effect”, or even “objective”.

Finally we turned towards our inner background, against which the experience “body” or “feeling” takes place: the respective frame of the heart, the state of the observer. This is the still more general background for the specific body-things and for the general feeling-things. This background is a thing in itself.

As we now know that all these levels are relative, that is, they are no ultimate realities or absolute truths, then there has to be something that is even more general than the state of the observer “heart”. What could that be?

It is “things in general”. We don’t inquire into these things or those things, but rather investigate their thingness. What are things as *things*? Of course we cannot disclose principles in a vacuum. We need examples in order to do this. And our first example builds upon the third application-base of mindfulness.

Background and falling-back ground

We may have previously wondered what the difference was between the contemplation of a scattered, unconcentrated heart and the contemplation of the five hindrances. In the first instance the practitioner understands a scattered, unconcentrated heart as being scattered and unconcentrated. In the second instance, *wishing-will, ill will, sloth&torpor, restlessness&remorse, doubt being internally present*, the practitioner understands that it is so.

By now it is no longer difficult for us to understand that the five hindrances are on a higher level than the respective states of the heart. They are the condition of the heart that contemplates itself, for example, as being scattered. When we consult the table on page 89 it can be expressed as follows:

The hindrances are the condition, the background for the scattered states. They are the falling-back ground, which hinders us from understanding these things and their contexts. And they are principles that are themselves things that in turn are subject to principles or conditions: it is for us to understand, *how* there is their arising, *how* they are abandoned, and *how* they do not arise in the future any more.

In other words, we contemplate the states of the heart more sharply, more precisely, understanding that they are things. *As things* they are dependent on conditions. When we see these conditions we can abandon them, and by doing so we also abandon the states that they condition or bring about at the same time.

When the hindrances are abandoned we see the hindrances more clearly: this is the condition for seeing the hindrances more clearly. This principle of reflexive, self-referencing or self-relating conditionality is the antidote to ignorance, which too is a condition for itself. Ignorance conditions ignorance – a topic that we covered at the end of Part 1 (but had maybe not fully understood at that point). This principle gains increasingly in importance in the course of the practice.

At first it appears frustrating: in order to overcome the hindrances we have to overcome the hindrances. Admittedly this is a paradox, but it can be resolved step by step as the principles of thingness and relationships gradually become clearer.

Overcoming

This overcoming, abandoning, transcending is what we have termed the “fourth stage” of our Dhamma hologram. In the context of satipaṭṭhāna we could say that the fourth application-base is about transcending the third application-base – the heart, the observer:

Bhikkhus, on whatever occasion a bhikkhu trains thus: “I shall breathe in as one who is able to contemplate impermanence”; trains thus: “I shall breathe out as one who is able to contemplate impermanence”; trains thus: “I shall breathe in as one who is able to contemplate dispassion”; trains thus: “I shall breathe out as one who is able to contemplate dispassion”; trains thus: “I shall breathe in as one who is able to contemplate cessation”; trains thus: “I shall breathe out as one who is able to contemplate cessation”; trains thus: “I shall breathe in as one who is able to contemplate letting go”; trains thus: “I shall breathe out as one who is able to contemplate letting go” – on that occasion a bhikkhu abides with things as one who is able to contemplate things, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having removed greed&grief in regard to the world. Having seen the abandonment of greed&grief with wisdom, he is *one who looks on with diligence**. That is why on that occasion a bhikkhu abides with things as one who is able to contemplate things ...⁸⁰

M 118

And of course, we also find the four aspects of the hologram *within* thing-contemplation in regard to the breath:

1. Impermanence is noticed; 2. with closer investigation, passion in regard to what is impermanent fades; 3. taking-up of what is no longer subject to passion ceases; 4. transcending or letting go is the result.

It is important to understand that this spreading out of aspects and steps is merely for the purpose of illustration and description. A hologram does not have parts! Dhamma does not fit into drawers. But it has to be verbalised somehow. And in order to describe it, a start has to be made somewhere.

The equation “transcending = thing-contemplating” has also to be understood as a didactic means. It is true that an understanding of thingness and conditionality is a precondition for transcending, no matter what the level, but this does not mean that we cannot yet let go on the first three application-bases of mindfulness. There, as well, we talked about things, connections and transcending. A few examples:

In body-contemplation we breathed in and out *calming* the body-*determination*. We compared corpses and realised that this body is such a *thing*. We experienced feeling as a *determination* of the heart and *calmed* it. *Liberating* the heart we breathed in and out.

How should we now understand thingness and conditionality in the most general way so that it leads us to letting go?

Phenomena, manifestations, things

The fourth application-base of mindfulness is called *dharmānupassanā* in Pāli. It would not be wrong to translate this as “contemplation of mind objects” or “contemplation of the teaching”, but these translations are quite narrow in their meaning: not general enough. They do not express that here it is about existence on the most fundamental level.

For the fourth application-base of mindfulness – contemplation of things – deals with fundamental questions such as these:

What are things?

What is the nature of things?

What is “all” all about?

What has all that got to do with my suffering and what can I do about it?

Phenomenology, the “lore of the things”, works on the same terrain as dhammānupassanā. It is able to ask good questions and give useful hints in order to help understand these questions. But the answers that we find after successfully practising satipaṭṭhāna are no longer topics of phenomenology.^s The *special* conditionality that I have already mentioned a number of times, is something a non-awakened being cannot derive from the phenomena as they are experienced by a non-awakened being. But in order to prepare the soil for an understanding of something which is still beyond reach, it can help to thoroughly acquaint one-self with ordinary conditionality. So, what are things?

The most important feature is this: “Things are conditioned; conditions make things.”^t

Things are *not* facts, not something “that is the case”. The “facts that are the case” in logic stand by themselves. They only exist in the quite abstract world of concepts that the logicians, who have abstracted themselves away, inhabit (see Kierkegaard on page 16). Things are *my* world (in contrast to Wittgenstein’s claims in the quote on page 23). Things appear in a world, coherent, in a context.

s Strictly speaking, they do not even answer the limited questions of the phenomenologists. The answers we are hoping for transcend their questions, make them pointless. Besides, they also transcend the one who is asking the questions.

t In German this sentence is almost tautological: “Dinge sind be-dingt; Be-Dingungen machen Dinge.” Translated into English literally: “Things are be-thinged. Be-thingsings make things.”

One type of context of things, one condition, is their background. The background, the condition, is on a higher, more general level.

The background is what the thing is *not*. It is *empty* of the thing (or the things). Things are surrounded by emptiness.

Another type of context of things is their relationship to *other* things, to some aspects, or even the totality of their background. Some of these other things were mentioned previously in the “The Sixth Sense” chapter: images of something absent – purpose, meaning, intentions. When we experience a thing, then this thing is not simply standing around stupidly, but rather it has a purpose, a meaning which is contained in the thing.^u This purpose is not something we have to ponder, it discloses itself immediately in the experience of the thing. When we see a ballpoint pen we immediately know that it is a ballpoint pen, without having to muse over its meaning. We can see the purpose *in* it, as an image we put *into* the immediate experience. We have already dealt with this, and likewise with the following:

Things exist in the structure of hierarchical levels. Therefore things can *arise*, change while *standing*, and *pass away*.

Meaning and purpose, intentions, conditions, background and so on are on a level that is higher and more general than the thing. But every thing is meaning and purpose, intention, condition, background and so on for things on a lower, more specific level.

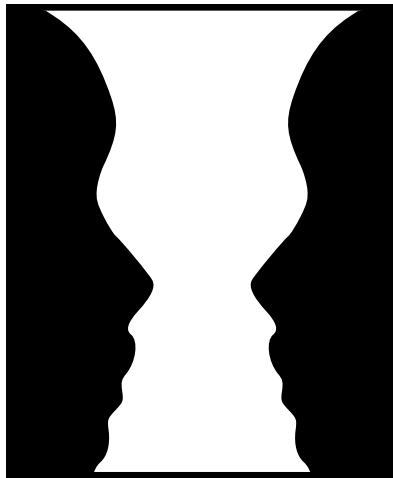
What is it that makes a thing a thing? What is the condition for there to be things at all – in its most general sense?

With the origin of attention is the origin of things. With the cessation of attention is the disappearance of things.⁸¹

S 47.42

^u Of course there may be things that have the sole purpose of standing around stupidly.

“Origin” refers to a condition itself as has already been explained. So, when there is a condition for attention, then *through that* there is a condition for “things”. What this origin is, whether it is the origin of suffering in its general sense or not – this we do not have to decide right now. We can “cancel out” *origin* and take on the following: with attention there are things; things are conditioned by attention. What will be a thing, is a matter of attention, what we are attentive to.



This picture by the Danish phenomenologist Edgar Rubin illustrates very nicely how this works – he actually created it specifically for this purpose:

If we attend to the white area we see some kind of cup, the famous Rubin's vase. The black area is the background. Without the black area – if it was likewise white – we would not be able to discern a vase. It is the condition for the white figure or gestalt.

If we “flip” attention over and attend to the black area we see two faces. The vases disappears, the white area becomes the background for the faces.

Next we will turn our attention away from “things in general” and direct it to the nature of things.

The Discourse - *Heaps of taking-up*

Again a bhikkhu abides with things thing-contemplating in terms of the five *taking-up-heaps**. And how does a bhikkhu abide with things thing-contemplating in terms of the five taking-up-heaps? Here a bhikkhu [understands]: 'Such is form, such is the origin of form, such is the disappearance of form; such is feeling, such is the origin of feeling, such is the disappearance of feeling; such is perception, such is the origin of perception, such is the disappearance of perception, such are determinations, such is the origin of determinations, such is the disappearance of determinations; such is consciousness, such is the origin of consciousness, such is the disappearance of consciousness.'

In this way he abides internally with things thing-contemplating, or he abides externally with things thing-contemplating, or he abides internally&externally with things thing-contemplating. Or else contemplating as things of origin he abides with things, or contemplating as things of passing-away he abides with things, or contemplating as things of origin&passing-away he abides with things. Or else 'there is things' mindfulness is present for him, just for the right measure of knowing and against-the-grain mindfulness. And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with things thing-contemplating in terms of the five taking-up-heaps.

6. The Nature of Things

Is the nature of things even more general than “things in general”? Can it ever be so? No, the nature of things is not more general: it is *universal*. This means it is a property of things on all levels. The nature of things affects “things in general” in the same way as it affects specific things.

If we proceed phenomenologically, that is, if we do not suppose that things exist independently on their own, we could also say: “The nature of things is the aspects of the *experience* of things, since things only exist *due to attention*.” This we learnt three pages ago.

The *taking-up-heaps* are this very nature of things. They are not on a higher level than “things in general”, rather they pervade everything on all levels. And here it doesn’t matter if things are present in the temporal sense, that is, if they are experienced now, or if they are absent, that is, if they are past or future. It doesn’t matter if they are present or absent in the spatial sense, that is, if they are here or yonder. It doesn’t matter if the experience of things is on a specific level or on a more general level, if it is coarse or subtle, low or sublime.

“But, venerable sir, in what respect does the term ‘heaps’ apply to the heaps?” – “Bhikkhu, any kind of form whatever, whether past, future, or present, internal or external, coarse or subtle, low or sublime, far or near – this is the form heap. [Ditto for the four other heaps.] It is in this respect, bhikkhu, that the term ‘heaps’ applies to the heaps.”⁸²

M 109

The five heaps, in Pāli *khandhā*, are those aspects that are present in the experience of all things. They are *aspects* or properties of the experience of things in our existence, this means that we cannot contemplate them without content, that is, without those things. We can only see them *in* their content, simply as the nature of those things. An illustrative example by the grandmaster of Buddho-phenomenology:

Thus, if a thing is a *solid pleasant shady tree for lying under that I now see*, its nature is, precisely, that it is *solid*, that it is *pleasant*, that it is *shady*, that it is a *tree for lying under*, and that it is *visible to me*. The solid pleasant shady tree for lying under that I see *is* a thing, a nature, a *dhamma*. Furthermore, each item severally – the solidity, the pleasantness, the shadiness, and so on – is a thing, a nature, a *dhamma*, in that each is distinct from the others, even though here they may not be independent of one another. These *dhammā*, in the immediate experience, are all *particular*. When, however, the *reflexive* attitude is adopted (as it is in *satisampañña*, the normal state of one practising the Dhamma), the particular nature – the solid pleasant shady tree for lying under that I see – is, as it were, ‘put in brackets’, and we arrive at the nature of the particular nature. Instead of *solid, pleasant, shady, tree for lying under, visible to me*, and so on, we have *matter (or substance), feeling, perception, determinations, consciousness ...* These things are of *universal* application – i.e. common to *all* particular natures (e.g. *eye-consciousness* is common to all things that have ever been, or are, or will be, *visible to me*) – and are the *dhammā* that make up the Dhamma. The Dhamma is thus the Nature of Things. And since this is what the Buddha teaches, it comes to mean also the Teaching.⁸³

Ñāṇavīra Bhikkhu

Admittedly, “heaps” sounds pretty dismissive for something as universal as being itself. Somehow I associate this word with excrement. But this is not at all inappropriate:

Bhikkhus, just as even a little bit of excrement has a bad smell, so too, I do not praise even a little bit of being, not even for a finger snap.⁸⁴

A 1.?

The five heaps are sometimes referred to as the five *groups* or the five *aggregates*, which sounds somewhat nicer. But as the footnote on page 47 already indicated, the terms *kāya* and *khandha* are phenomenologically different. Therefore it is desirable to underline this distinction by using different apposite terms. “Heaps” better captures the nature of the *khandhas*, viz. the nature of the nature of things. In contrast to a group (*kāya*) a heap consists of components of the same kind. In contrast to an aggregate, a heap has no definite limit or reach. Our heap of experience has a “peak” – the centre of attention – and at the periphery it fades into shallowness, the diffuseness at the horizon of experience. And it peters out in the infinity of the hierarchical structure of experience.

Fortunately the “spiritually competent” term *khandhas* has now been accepted into English Dhamma-vocabulary.

Well then ... the five *khandhas*. Even if they are universals, this does not mean that they constitute some kind of metaphysical primordial essence. They are still conditioned, they are things too, and therefore by no means independent.

The four *main realities**, bhikkhu, are the cause and condition for the manifestation of the form heap. *Contact** is the cause and condition for the manifestation of the feeling heap. Contact is the cause and condition for the manifestation of the perception heap. Contact is the cause and condition for the manifestation of the determinations heap. Name&form is the cause and condition for the manifestation of the consciousness heap.⁸⁵

M 109

Dangerous form

The teaching of the Buddha is not so much concerned with detailed definitions of what the various categories of experience or aspects of being would be – in contrast to the “Buddhisms” that developed in later times. The teaching of the Buddha is concerned with what we

should do with the khandhas. The teaching of the Buddha does not *explain*, but rather – in its own words – it *leads*. Let us examine the scant passages in the suttas which to some extent *describe* the heaps, because they are instructive phenomenologically.

The first heap – form – is different to the following four inasmuch as it is not dependent on contact, as we learnt in the previous quote. The four main realities, or main elements, are not only the condition for the experience of form – meaning we can experience form *in* or *through* them – they are in fact identical with form:

The four main realities and *form** derived from the four main realities – this is called form.⁸⁶

M9

The four main realities are earth, water, fire, wind – the four fundamental elements, so to speak. But this does not imply that form is the final “world out there”, the existence or non-existence of which has racked the brains of mankind for millennia. The word “existence” is completely meaningless phenomenologically if *experience* is not involved. And form (just as every other aspect of experience) only *exists* together with the other four khandhas.

That form is not dependent on contact puts an end to idealist ideas that the world only “happens” in the mind, that everything is but a dream. Form is a reality, literally: a sphere of things.

So far in this book we have equated form with matter. Now we will express it more precisely (and later on even more so): form is that which gives resistance to experience, that which “stimulates” or “triggers” the senses. Identifying form with the concept of “matter”, which is laden with all sorts of Greek thought, is not quite correct insofar as form also appears in non-material experience, i.e. in the mind. In other words, even an imagined apple is form – derived from the four main realities. But an imagined apple is not matter, it is not material.

But when internally the *mind* is intact and externally things come into range and there is the corresponding involvement, then there is the appearance of the corresponding section of consciousness. The *form* of what has thus become is classified under the form taking-up-heap.⁸⁷

M 28

This brings us back to the exciting question raised on page 99, whether an apple tastes better than a locomotive. Or: “What kind of taste does the earth element have?”

None at all! Taste is a perception. Perceptions are each assigned to a specific sense, in this case to the tongue, the sense of tasting. Earth element or earth-main-reality is an aspect of the *behaviour of form*, not a perception. In case we deem it important to find out whether something belongs to perception or to form we can pose the simple question: “Could I experience this with several senses?”

By way of example we could consider a net. A net is a certain specific structure of earth element – squares strung together. I cannot *look* through the edge of the squares, but I can look through the interior. I can identify the same structure by *feeling* it *out*, with the touch sense. The eye sees a tennis racket. This is eye-perception. The hand feels a tennis racket out. This is touch-perception or body-perception. The net structure, the behaviour of form, is the same for both senses, it stands “above” the perceptions.

Another, more general example for the behaviour of form is the gap or hole. We can see holes, hear them (the pauses in a piece of music), touch them, think them – and theoretically even smell and taste them.

Very often a hole is an example of a lack, when some substance is missing.^v A hole is something negative in regard to substance.

v But this is not necessarily so. A Swiss Emmentaler cheese would be lacking something if it did *not* have holes. The hole “borrows” positivity from the surrounding cheese: without cheese ... continued on page 148

It is only in the human world that there can be lacks. A lack presupposes a trinity: that which is missing or “the lacking,” that which misses what is lacking or “the existing,” and a totality which has been broken by the lacking and which would be restored by the synthesis of “the lacking” and “the existing” – this is “the lacked.” ... Human reality by which lack appears in the world must be itself a lack.⁸⁸

Jean-Paul Sartre

What he wants to say here is that for a lack to appear it needs something *missing*, something that *is there*, and an idea of the *complete* thing which would not be missing anything if the missing was there. The half moon is incomplete only because the image of the full moon is available for comparison (background!). But the half moon *in itself* is simply what it is, for it nothing is lacking. For a lack to appear – as with the idea of the full moon – a human being who issues the judgement “lack” has to be there. And then something is lacking *for the human being!* In this way the human being brings the lack to *his or her own being!*

Suffering from a lack is thus caused by the human being him- or herself. Sartre, being one of the most capable phenomenologists, even took it one step further. He saw that even the for-itself (the “subject”) is lacking something, namely, the Being-in-itself (objective, permanent existence). He could see that the for-itself causes the lack itself, but he couldn’t see its origin: that the lack conditions the for-itself.

This could be a way to express the special conditionality that the Buddha discovered, but using Sartre’s terminology. Let us now gradually approach this discovery.

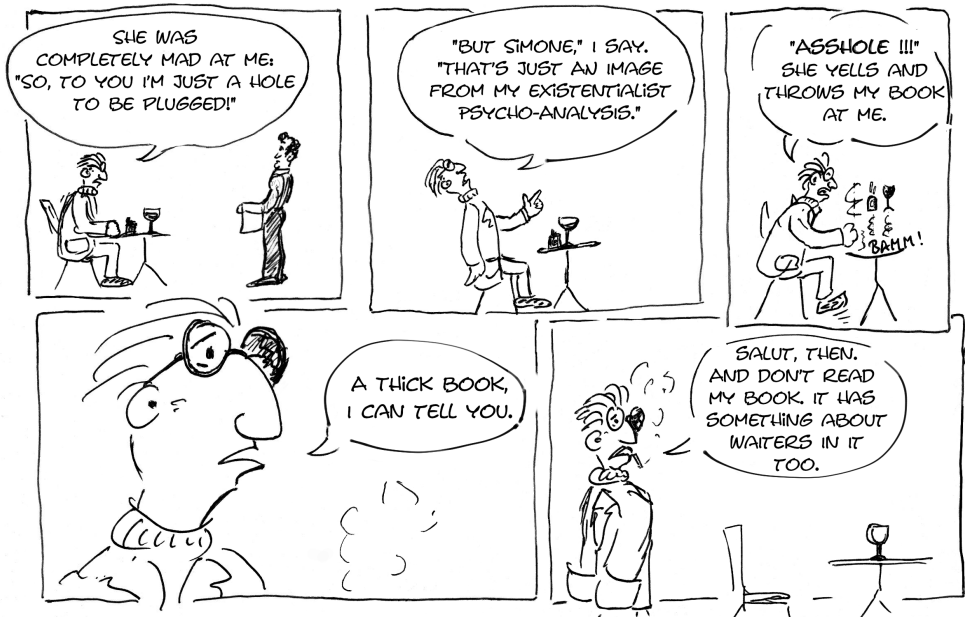
For Sartre the special conditionality, dependent co-arising, was out of reach. It was not possible for him to see the origin of the lack of

around it there would not be a hole. But conversely the cheese borrows something from the hole, which “in itself” doesn’t even exist: without holes it would not be a Swiss Emmentaler cheese.

being within the structure of being. Instead he preferred to deal with the details and peculiarities of its universals.

For example, his observations on the topic of the hole as being the prototype of lack, his application of these observations in his existentialist psycho-analysis, his deliberations on the "obscenity of everything which *gapes open*", which is "*an appeal to being* as all holes are" and "appeals to a strange flesh" – all of this provides stimulating and entertaining reading.⁸⁹ But the danger of form remains hidden to him:

Namely, that nothing remains as it was – and that it is precisely this that goes against the grain for us. And why this is so.



What was the danger of form for Jean-Paul Sartre?

Appearance of phenomena

The three heaps conditioned by contact – feeling, perception, determinations – are that which endows things with their appearance, their look, their name: they make things be what they are *for us*.

We have already dealt extensively with feeling. On top of this we now contemplate feeling not as being the *more general* aspect of a *specific* experience with the body, that is, a *specific* feeling, but rather as something universal.

What is perception? Let's hand this question over:

And what, bhikkhus, do you call *perception**? “It perceives”, therefore it is called perception. And what does it perceive? It perceives blue, yellow, red and white.⁹⁰

S 22. 79

That's not an overwhelming amount of information, but I already pointed out in the previous chapter that a definition, that is, a delimitation, is probably not necessary for the successful practice of the Dhamma.

Phenomenologically speaking I could add: Blue, yellow, red and white all are examples of things. The Pāli term for perception literally means “knowing together”. Perception “makes” things, in concert with attention. Whereas attention makes things stand out against their background, perception knows by means of certain qualities, for example colour, what belongs to a particular thing and what doesn't. Perception understands a thing as a whole, it takes a thing to be true, in the sense of the quote by Luang Pū Lā on page 90.^w

Despite, or rather, because the definitions of these basic “modules” of experience are so sparse, we should take care that we use the terms

w The Latin origin of the word *perception* literally means “taking-complete”. The German word *Wahrnehmung* literally means “taking-true”.

correctly. For example it is not correct to say, "I perceive a feeling." A feeling is felt. A perception is perceived.

Determinations is the aspect of experience (of things) that points beyond the thing, puts it into a relationship with other things. We have already gotten to know about this when we dealt with intentions, purpose, meaning and possibilities. They are all specific determinations. But "determinations" is even more general.

Determinations are conditions for something else, namely for determined things. Since all things are always conditioned, we could say it even more succinctly: "Determinations are things that determine *other* things." (And *as things*, they themselves are of course determined too.)

The breath determines the body, feeling determines the heart, we have mentioned this earlier. And also that in the nature of determinations there is something hidden that cannot be revealed with the tools of phenomenology. And this is now on our agenda. What do determinations determine in a general sense?

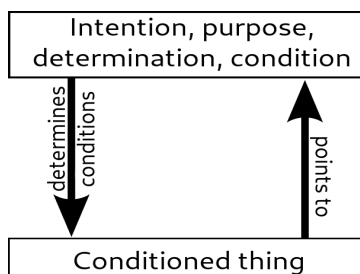
And what, bhikkhus, do you call determinations? "They *determine-up as determined*⁹¹", therefore they are called determinations. And what do they determine-up as determined? They determine-up form as determined for *form-ness**, they determine-up feeling as determined for feeling-ness, they determine-up perception as determined for perception-hood, they determine-up determinations as determined for determination-hood, they determine-up consciousness as determined for consciousness-hood.⁹¹

S 22. 79

They determine virtually everything, including themselves. They determine the way of things, their nature. They make what is be what it is.

Intention is an example of determinations which assumes a distinguished position in the suttas. Intention is the aspect in the experience of a thing which gives meaning to *another* thing (on a lower level), assigns a purpose to it, attributes significance. Intention can thus be understood as a possibility, or as the potential of the thing on the lower level.

This “lower” conditioned thing points to its meaning&purpose, to its intention. This meaning&purpose is a condition for the thing.



By “assigning” to the thing its higher meaning&purpose, intention *determines* the thing. It makes the thing be what it is.

We could even say that meaning&purpose is “part” of the thing, but on a higher level. This higher level is for the lower level – the actual present thing – “outside” of time, that is, (relatively) eternal.

For example, a cup points to drinking tea. By that it becomes a tea cup. Drinking tea is the meaning&purpose of the tea cup, the condition that the cup can exist as a *tea* cup at all. Drinking tea is contained in the cup only as an image, as an absent possibility. But it is a “forever” possible possibility.

Someone might raise the objection: “Well, but *the cup* does not have an intention. It is us, the tea drinkers, who give meaning to the cup.”

That’s absolutely right, since we do not assume that tea cups are facts in a lifeless world. They are experienced phenomena in a world that is inhabited by experiencing and tea drinking tea drinkers. To consider a world without sentient beings in it is completely meaningless. Such a world cannot *exist*.

Possessed possessor

This brings us to the next point. The tea cup has yet another meaning&purpose, a *special* kind of “what for”, a particular something that it is *for*.

It is *for me*, the tea drinker. It is *my* cup!

Many people try to find happiness in owning as much as possible. The satisfaction is not so much found in the possessed things, but rather in being the owner, the possessor.

To possess means to *have for myself*; that is, to be the unique end of the existence of the object. If possession is entirely and concretely given, the possessor is the *raison d'être* of the possessed object.⁹²

Jean-Paul Sartre

To be the *raison d'être*, the ground, justification and reason of being, for a luxury conveyance or a luxury consort (female, male, non-binary) – now, ain't that something? That gives rise to feeling good! The good feeling arises because a lack is remedied. But it is not the lack of gorgeous girls, good-looking guys or classy cars. There is something lacking *for the possessors* themselves: *substance*!

The existential gap, the question, “I am ... but what?”, the hole torn by the question of being – we try to patch it up with all sorts of equipment. If something is mine, if it is *for me*, then I am the eternal reason of being, the unmoved background, the intention, the master, the purpose of “living” of my belongings – in exactly the same way as my being, my Dasein as an “I” or “self” feels: eternal, unmoved and masterful.

People who are spiritually inclined, however, see that possessions can also be a burden, that possessing is stressful, and that these belongings are always the same old junk anyway, and it's constantly going kaput. They are inclined to simplify their lives by trying to get along with fewer and fewer possessions. Some ascetics in India went (and still go) quite a long way with this:

“Partnership? Mere stress – no mistress in my home! Home? Homeless is better than having a millstone around the neck! Talking about neck – no clothing around it either; go easy, go naked! Food? What a nuisance – fasting till blue in the face! Pleasant feelings in the body? So addictive – self-flagellation may be helpful here!”

In the best case scenario those ascetics let go of the “possession” of sense pleasure by replacing it with the bliss of deep meditation.



Careful! Do not make pain your possession either!

The Buddha too saw that “possessing” is a problem. He called it mine-obsession, *acquisition*, *taking-up**. But he did not suggest that we try to solve the problem by *denying* ourselves all *possessions*. Because what we fundamentally want to own is not this or that trifle. It is as broad as our entire existence:

Here, bhikkhus, an uninstructed ordinary person, who does not pay attention to noble ones and is not well-versed, not trained in the noble Dhamma, who does not pay attention to upright men and is not well-versed, not trained in the Dhamma of upright men, regards form, feeling, perception, determinations, consciousness and what is seen, heard, sensed, cognized, attained, sought, and pondered with the mind thus: “*This is mine*, this one I am, this one is my self.”⁹³

M 22

That’s how it appears in reflexion to the uninstructed ordinary phenomenologist, and even to the quoted ascetics and others who are spiritually inclined.

The Buddha tells us that it is exactly the other way round. It is not the possessor that determines the possessed, but rather it is the possessing that determines the experience of being the possessor, or of being anything at all. Dasein or being (of a possessor or whatever) is not the eternal background for taking-up and acquisition, but rather the taking-up of the five heaps (“grabbing into the heaps”) is the condition for being. Consciousness (of being anything) is not, as it appears, the eternal background for all things, but it is determined, dependent on determinations. *This* is the special conditionality!

It is accessible to reflexion only in higher training. Until we get there we have to trust the Buddha that it is possible to see the special conditionality and be liberated from it, and also to trust that the Buddha knew what he was talking about. Whether having that kind of faith and trust can be called “religiously inclined” (literally: “making a connection”), I don’t know.

But, bhikkhus, a well-instructed noble-disciple, who pays attention to noble ones and is well-versed, trained in the noble Dhamma, who pays attention to upright men and is well-versed, trained in the Dhamma of upright men, regards form, feeling, perception, determ-

inations, consciousness and what is seen, heard, sensed, cognized, attained, sought, and pondered with the mind thus: “This is *not* mine, this one I am not, this one is not my self.”⁹⁴

M 22

An objection, rather timidly raised ... but in any case only fictitious: “Normally it is translated as: ‘This is not mine, *this* I am not, *this* is not my self.’ So what then, would this ‘*this one*’ be?”

That’s correct, it is normally translated like that. But this does not mean that it is correct like that. Not only linguistically is there a difference between “this-it” (neuter, Pāli: *etam*) and “this-he” (masculine, Pāli: *eso*), which very often falls by the wayside, and not due to a lack of language skill, but due to a lack of understanding. Special conditionality is hard to see, even for translators.⁹⁵

Let’s turn back three pages ... The possessor makes herself or himself to be the ground of being for the possessed object or (any)thing. But the noble-disciple should see through this and regard it thus: “This thing is not mine, this possessor I am not, this *raison d’être* of the possessed thing is not my self.”

To be a self – and that’s what we regard ourselves to be – means to be independent, eternal, delighting (and delighted). Taking-up does not mean that we want to own *this or that thing*. What we want is some substance that gives content to our assumed selfhood. This substance is what we take up in experience, as “my experience”.

If we do not distinguish between “this (thing)” and “this (one)” we could easily fool ourselves into believing that it is easy to forgo acquisition in regard to *external* things. We could think that we do not “own” the song of a bird, nor take up the moon quoted above – no matter whether half or full: “The moon is not mine, I am not the moon, and the moon is not my self either. Got it!” And we congratulate ourselves that we have understood the teaching so well.

An assumed self and a (back-)ground of being have the same nature – the ability to possess something:

“Bhikkhus, if there were a self, would there be ‘what belongs to my self’?” – “Yes, venerable sir.” – “If there were what belongs to a self, would there be ‘my self’?”
 – “Yes, venerable sir.”⁹⁶

M 22

Whatever we would like to possess – no matter whether it is something specific or possession in general – is exactly that which lends substance to our assumed selfhood. And what is possession in general? Things. Not just things in and of themselves, but things that are connected to other things: determinations.

Determinations are things that condition other things. But they are more than that; there is something hidden in their nature – otherwise they would simply be, and be called, “conditions”. What is hidden is their relationship to the one who experiences them. We regard *ourselves* as *their* condition – *my* experience, *my* determinations. But it is exactly the other way round: “My” determinations do not just condition other things, they also condition *me* to be their *supposed* possessor, ground of being, self.

Determinations are conditions that we regard as conditioned things. We believe that they point to us, but in reality they condition us.

They condition our Dasein, our existence, our being. They are our equipment for being. This is an aspect of this specific, the special, hard to see conditionality.

And it doesn’t help, if on top of all of this, *saṅkhārā* is translated as “conditioned phenomena” (notoriously so in many Dhamma texts). This type of “understanding” of the Dhamma is founded in scholarly commentarial literature. It jams and disarms one of the most important weapons against ignorance. Because this is exactly the problem that the uninstructed ordinary person has, that she or he views determinations in regard to her- or himself only as being conditioned phenomena. As long as a vision of the special conditionality is still beyond reach, we are well advised to take what the Buddha taught literally, and to not reinterpret it according to our own whims.

An example: My robe is a determination. I do not provide the ground for its being, its purpose of life, rather it is the robe that provides a place for me as a monk. Where would “the monk” be without a robe? It is *my ground of being!* ⁹⁷

In the Dīgha Nikāya there is a discourse (No. 17, Mahāsudassana Sutta) that describes in full detail the equipment of a wheel-turning universal monarch: his luxury conveyances – flying elephant, flying horse; his luxury consort (only one?) who even gets up before him and retires after him. The bottom line of the sutta is that all these things were impermanent determinations – the transitory equipment of being for the king which gave him his identity. If there were no such determinations there would be no universal king either: no wheel, no wheel-turning monarch. The universal monarch “per se” doesn’t ever exist. He borrows his existence from his equipment. His equipment is his ground of being, the reason for his Dasein, his foundation of existence.

That’s our lot too. It applies to all of us. Our respective self-image has no essence in itself. We need our “possessions” to fill the gap, we borrow positivity from our Dasein equipment: material items, the physical body, cherished views and opinions, tasks and habits, names and titles, thoughts, feelings, perceptions – determinations, all of them.

We may not be able to see the special conditionality yet, but sometimes we may just get an inkling as to why “the letting go of all acquisition” and the “calming of all determinations” equates to the end of all suffering. That is, when we see the moment of relaxation in specific individual instances, when we no longer need a particular something in our life so urgently any more.

Our “self” is empty of substance, it does not have its own independent existence. It borrows positivity from the determinations that “surround” it.

Our being is like an Emmentaler: we are just holes surrounded by nothing but cheese.

The name of the form

The last of the five heaps is consciousness. Consciousness is dependent on name&form. We are already familiar with what form is. So what then, is “name”?

Feeling, perception, intention, contact, attention – this, friends, is called name.⁹⁸

M9

Consciousness is different to the three preceding heaps – feeling, perception and determinations. Although consciousness is likewise dependent on contact (which is contained in “name”), consciousness is in addition also dependent on form.

There is a certain tendency to put consciousness and the other three heaps together into the same pan and call the resulting stir fry “the mind” or “mentality” in contrast to form or “matter” or “the body”. This juxtaposition of “mind” and “matter” is familiar to European thought, but is not to be found in this form in the suttas.

The *experience* of matter – and experience alone being what ultimately interests us here – is certainly not material, but neither is it non-material. I don’t wish to open up a philosophical debate just for the sake of it here, but if we comprehend, as happens so often, name&form simply as “mind&matter” or “mentality&corporeality”, then all we gain from this is another blunt tool in our toolbox.

Consciousness is the *presence* of the content of experience, the *presence* of phenomena. It is the aspect that “makes sure” that things are known or experienced or cognized. In other words, that they are *there*. The content, *that which is present*, is name&form. Form, as we have learned, is not dependent on contact. But whenever form is *experienced*, this always occurs together with its “look”, its “name”, which includes contact:

Feeling “tells” whether the experience of form is pleasant, unpleasant or neutral; perception “says” what shape, colour, sound, smell and so on it has; intention “names” the purpose, the meaning; contact “takes

care” that form can per-form in experience in the first place; attention provides the alignment of focus, of emphasis, it determines what is in the centre and foreground, and what is not.

Since we now know what the “name of the form” is, we can further refine our understanding of form. At first and provisionally, we called it “matter”; later we called it “trigger of the senses”.

Those tokens, Ānanda, those marks, those signs, those indications by which there is a description of the form-group – if those tokens, those marks, those signs, those indications were absent, would resistance-contact be discerned at all in the name-group?

– No, indeed not, venerable sir.

D 15

The marks of the form-group – the modes of behaviour of the four elements – “trigger” *contact*, the coming about of the “performance” of the phenomenon. They offer resistance to the things listed under “name”.

Please note: In this case we are not talking of a form-*heap* with its lack of any clear limit, but rather of the appearance of a specific phenomenon which is bounded or defined by “name”: a group of form, a form-*group* or form-*body* (rūpa-*kāya*).

Those tokens, Ānanda, those marks, those signs, those indications by which there is a description of the name-group – if those tokens, those marks, those signs, those indications were absent, would designation-contact be discerned at all in the form-group?

– No, indeed not, venerable sir.⁹⁹

D 15

The marks of the name-group – feeling, perception, intention, contact and attention – “designate” *contact*, the coming about of the “performance” of the phenomenon. They design or depict or “describe” the behaviour of form.

Without a form-group there would be nothing for name to designate or “describe”. Without a name-group form would not have an appearance, no *design-ation*. Name and form must come together as name&form, so that designation-contact and resistance-contact can be discerned; in tandem they are the condition for “experience-contact” in general – the coming about of the “performance” of the phenomenon.

The way the discourse is worded – designation-contact is discerned *in* the form-group, resistance-contact is discerned *in* the name-group – a tight interlacing of “matter” and its “mental” picture finds its expression. That should put paid to the debate once and for all, as to whether the world “exists out there” or whether it is just “a dream”. The teaching of things as being name&form avoids both extremes: “form” is a safeguard against idealism, and “name” is a safeguard against materialism.

Presence

So, name&form is the content of experience. To make this content become an experienced phenomenon something else is needed: name&form must *be present*, it must *be cognized*, it must *be there*. This presence is consciousness. Without consciousness it would be totally pointless to speak of a phenomenon:

And, bhikkhus, this name&form has what as its source, what as its origin, what as its production, what as its coming-forth? Name&form has consciousness as its source, consciousness as its origin, consciousness as its production, consciousness as its coming-forth.¹⁰⁰

M 38

Since presence is the condition for what is present – consciousness is the condition for name&form – consciousness is more general than the experienced, present things. It is, when compared to the phenomena, on a higher level. For the phenomena it is “outside” of time.

And it is for exactly this reason that in most spiritual traditions and religions, consciousness is taken up as the favourite object of self-identification. The idea behind this being: “Consciousness is not an aspect of experience (of something), but rather it is the ever present nature of the experiencer who is conscious (of things *for him- or herself*).”^x This “being conscious” appears to be the eternal background, the ground of being for all experienced things, however impermanent *they* may be.

On top of that, it appears to us as if consciousness exists independently: “If consciousness didn’t have anything to experience, well, then it would just float around on its own until it found something to experience.” The *teaching* of “pure consciousness” without content floats around in many spiritual traditions. For example, it is one of the cornerstones of Vedānta – one of the traditions in Hinduism.

And that is also the reason why “good Buddhists” who have long since known that “everything” is empty or impermanent or not-self, who take pains in their meditation to watch “everything”, right down to the smallest detail, “constantly arising and passing away”, may still wonder: “Why is it that I myself feel so eternal? Why am I always the unmoved observer ‘behind’ the things? Why does everything change except for myself?” That is, as previously mentioned, *if* they are so fortunate as to wonder.

This is nothing new. Even at the time of the Buddha there were people, also among the bhikkhus, who took consciousness as being the eternal instance behind all things. They were so fortunate that the Buddha was around to point out their error to them. As, for example, to Sāti, the son of a fisherman:

x This ambiguity can be expressed in German: „Ich bin *mir* einer Sache bewusst.“ – Literally: “I am conscious of something *for me*.” And: “Eine Sache *ist mir* bewusst.” That would be: “Something *is conscious for me*.” Since the English language doesn’t allow for the latter expression, German speakers may have an edge here on the road to enlightenment.

“As I understand the Dhamma taught by the Blessed One, it is this same consciousness that runs and wanders on, not another.”

“What is that consciousness, Sāti?”

“Venerable sir, it is that which speaks and has to feel and experiences here and there the result of good&evil actions.”

“Misguided man, to whom have you ever known me to teach the Dhamma in that way? Misguided man, have I not spoken in many ways of dependently arisen consciousness, that without a condition there is no coming into existence of consciousness?”¹⁰¹

M 38

Conditionality of consciousness was *pointed out* by the Buddha in many ways. So it was obviously not all that obvious. And bhikkhu Sāti did not listen well, again obviously. Here a few examples of the many ways – the manifold methodology:

When name&form is, consciousness is. Name&form-conditioned is consciousness.¹⁰²

D 14

We had already mentioned this conditional relationship at the beginning of this chapter, but just expressed it somewhat differently. Three more examples:

That anyone ... could say: “Apart from form, apart from feeling, apart from perception, apart from determinations, I shall describe the coming and going of consciousness, its passing away and emergence, its growth, increase, and maturation” – that is impossible.¹⁰³

M 102

Just as fire is classified by the particular condition dependent on which it burns – when fire burns dependent on logs, it is classified as a log fire; when fire burns dependent on faggots, it is classified as a faggot fire; when fire burns dependent on grass, it is classified as a grass fire; when fire burns dependent on cow dung, it is classified as a cow dung fire; when fire burns dependent on chaff, it is classified as a chaff fire; when fire burns dependent on rubbish, it is classified as a rubbish fire – so too, consciousness is classified by the particular condition dependent on which it arises. When consciousness arises dependent on the eye and forms, it is classified as eye-consciousness [and so on for the other five senses] ...

Consciousness has determinations as its source, determinations as its origin, determinations as its production, determinations as its coming forth.¹⁰⁴

M 38

Consciousness and determinations are related to each other in the same way as the “owner” and his equipment of being are: as the same pair!

The “but who?”-syndrome

Perhaps someone may now be thinking: “Very well, got it, makes sense: consciousness, the observer, the possessor – all conditioned, no self! But then who perceives this conditionality?”

The observer of conditionality yet again escapes scrutiny. We have already come across this escapism when contemplating body parts and properties. Where does the observer hide? The observer moves up to the next higher, relatively “eternal” level of self-contemplation or reflexion (cross-reference to the diagram “Coordinates of Here”). Even cross-referencing to the soulless nature of body and mind, subatomic particles haunted by 108 mind factors and more, won’t do here. This can go on endlessly: “But then who is asking, ‘but who?’?”

This phenomenon has nothing to do with the fact that the time of the Buddha has long since gone by. The “but who?”-syndrome existed in his time too:

Then the Blessed One, having understood with his *heart** the thought in the heart of that bhikkhu, addressed the bhikkhus thus: “It is possible, bhikkhus, that some misguided man here, stupid and ignorant, with his heart dominated by craving, might think that he should overtop the Teacher’s dispensation thus: ‘So, it seems, good man, that form is not-self, feeling is not-self, perception is not-self, determinations are not-self, consciousness is not-self. What self, then, will actions affect, that are done by the not-self?’”¹⁰⁵

M 109

In this case not-self was merely conceived as an idea “out there”. Nevertheless to pose this question “but who?” is still better than paying lip service of “Buddhist correctness”. It is part of the practice to face up to the realisation that ordinary human beings can’t help but ask after the “who”. The teaching of the Buddha goes against the grain. First of all we have to recognise and accept that we do not understand it, or better still: that we do not *see* it in terms of that very teaching.

This goes against the grain, especially for those who have to be clued up on the teaching for professional reasons – the full time Buddhologists, Dhamma and meditation teachers. This, however, is not a matter of professional conceit, rather of the conceit “I am”, resulting from the craving to *be there* as the “owner of knowledge”. Scholars, like other ordinary human beings, cannot acknowledge that they *don’t* know, *don’t* understand. They have to produce something, show something for it. For them it is better to provide trivialised answers than none at all!

The juxtaposition of mind and matter mentioned above is one of these. A specific variant of it being the following widespread inter-

pretation of name&form: “Form is the body, inhabited by the four other khandhas.” Craving for being is forever lurking beneath the surface, is always waiting in ambush, always intent on reserving a place for the experiencer as a self in the game of existence: “I do not know ‘who’ it is, but this ‘who’ has to be someone.”

This following “explanation” appears even more professional: “A self, a person doesn’t really exist because *it only consists of the five khandhas*. And since the five khandhas just arise and pass away, they do not really exist: so, in reality there is no person either.” It is that simple, case closed!

Or perhaps the person, the one who asks, is somewhere *in* the five heaps? Even the publisher of the “Notes on Dhamma” was puzzled by this particular question. And fortunately he also posed it to the author in a letter. The author answered:

You quote the passage from Dhamma about the shady tree and putting it in brackets reflexively; and then you say ‘The feeling, perception, determinations, consciousness are in me – form is in the tree. Or is the form also in me?’ This is a confusion of thought that arises from not taking the experience as the basic unit. If there were no experience there would be no *tree* and no *me*; consequently the experience has priority over *tree* and *me*, in the sense that the *tree* and *me* depend upon the occurrence of the experience. It is therefore a confusion to reverse the situation and ask which part of the experience is ‘in me’ and which part ‘in the tree’. All that can be said is that ‘there is experience of a shady tree’, and that this experience can be analysed into the five taking-up-heaps. One can say that form, feeling, perception, determinations, and consciousness (and also the *tree* and *me*) are in the experience (more strictly they *constitute* the experience), but one cannot ask where the experience is.¹⁰⁶

Ñāṇavīra Bhikkhu

The “I” does not *consist* of the heaps; it rather comes into play because the five heaps are *taken up*. We just can’t help it. For now we have to accept this.

“Okay, then we stop asking after the ‘who’ and ask after the ‘where’: Where is the one who is taking up? From where does he take up the heaps?”

The one who asks would like to reserve a place *outside* the oh so impermanent khandhas, a place to make him- or herself at home. In principle this is exactly the same strategy as in the case of asking after the “who”. But nothing will come of it!

Lady, is that taking-up identical with these five taking-up-heaps, or is the taking-up something apart from the five taking-up-heaps?

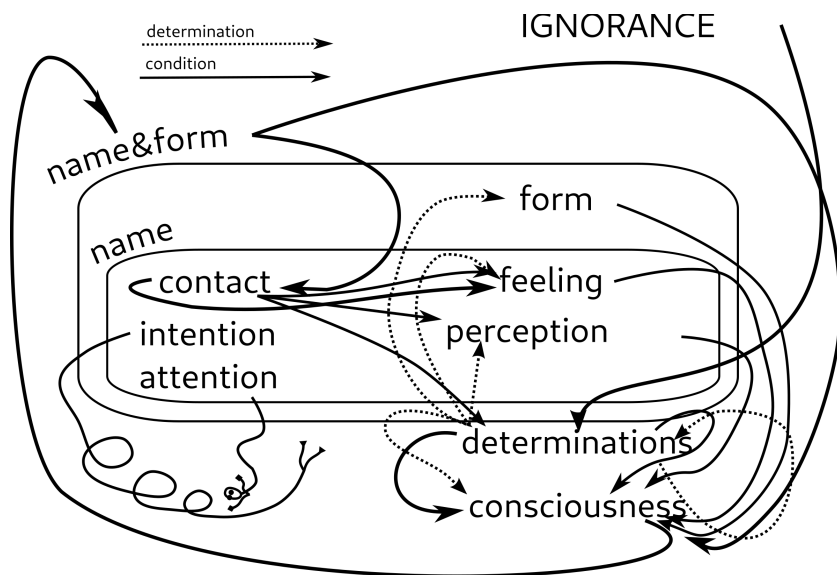
– Friend Visākha, that taking-up is neither identical with these five taking-up-heaps, nor is the taking-up something apart from the five taking-up-heaps. It is the *will-passion** in the five taking-up-heaps that is the taking-up there.¹⁰⁷

M 44

Connections

So far we have gathered quite a bit of information about the five heaps of taking-up. There are many connections and relationships, many facets of conditionality. Admittedly, this abundance of content concerning the various aspects of the teaching can be somewhat intimidating at times.

When I first got my teeth into this topic many years ago I tried to obtain an overview by transferring all these conditional realities into a neat diagram, a tidy chart of sorts. It looked something like this (excerpts only):



In this way I tried to get a grasp of the teaching. A grasp at nothing, for if we grasp for the teaching, if we want to possess it, we only turn it into the equipment of being again.

Then it caught my eye that perception is one of the five heaps, but also a constituent of name. As a heap, perception gets 20% of the total. As one fifth of name, which is half of name&form, which in turn is half of the total, perception will only get ... one moment ... $100\% \div 2 \div 2 \div 5 = 5\%$!

And is the determinations-heap (20%) the same as contact, intention and attention taken together, that is, as a constituent of name, 15%?

Any attempt to spread out one's own being neatly in front of oneself is doomed to failure. As soon as self-reflexion comes into play, inconsistencies and contradictions will result. A mathematician by the name of Gödel has even proven this mathematically.

If it has to be maths, then in this way:

$$[(\text{form} + \text{name}) + \text{consciousness} = \text{experience}] \times \text{taking-up} = \{\text{experience "in person"}\}$$

This formula can be applied to all specific experiences, to experience in general, to all experience. It is *universal*.

This far, Ānanda, may one come into the world or age or die or fall or arise, this far is there a way of designation, this far is there a way of language, this far is there a way of description, this far is there a sphere of understanding, this far the round proceeds as disclosure of a situation, – so far, that is to say, as there is name&form together with consciousness.¹⁰⁸

D 15

Being is a hologram: structures of things, of relationships, of principles which repeat themselves in a reflexive, self-referencing way on all levels. A hologram can't be pigeonholed. It has to be understood as a whole. Only then will it be understood in every part, aspect and detail.

As soon as it has been understood that the hologram cannot be regarded as a self, no ground is left for self-identification:

Bhikkhus, those *samaṇas** and brahmins who regard a self in various ways all regard as self the five taking-up-heaps, or a certain one among them.¹⁰⁹

S 22.47

“The five taking-up-heaps”, “name&form plus consciousness” or “the six main properties”^y – are all ways of describing experience in general. Another way is “the six domains”.

This is our next topic.

y The four properties already mentioned, in addition *space* and *consciousness*.

The Discourse – Domains

Again a bhikkhu abides with things thing-contemplating in terms of the six internal&external *domains**. And how does a bhikkhu abide with things thing-contemplating in terms of the six internal&external domains? Here a bhikkhu understands the eye, and he understands forms, and what the fetter is that arises dependent on both, that he understands too. And he understands how there is the arising of an unarisen fetter; and he understands how there is the abandoning of the arisen fetter; and he understands how there is the future non-arising of the abandoned fetter.

He understands the ear, and he understands sounds ... He understands the nose, and he understands odours ... He understands the tongue, and he understands flavours ... He understands the body, and he understands *tangibles** ... He understands the mind, and he understands things, and what the fetter is that arises dependent on both, that he understands too. And he understands how there is the arising of an unarisen fetter; and he understands how there is the abandoning of the arisen fetter; and he understands how there is the future non-arising of the abandoned fetter.

In this way he abides internally with things thing-contemplating, or he abides externally with things thing-contemplating, or he abides internally&externally with things thing-contemplating. Or else contemplating as things of origin he abides with things, or contemplating as things of passing-away he abides with things, or contemplating as things of origin&passing-away he abides with things. Or else ‘there is things’ mindfulness is present for him, just for the right measure of knowing and against-the-grain mindfulness. And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with things thing-contemplating in terms of the six internal&external domains.

7. All and More

Having contemplated experience (of things) universally – in regard to its nature and aspects – we now examine how experience comes about, and how far it extends. Right at the beginning of this book, in the first chapter we addressed the role that the senses play with regard to our place in the world as experiencing beings. Let's begin this recap with the eye. The same applies to each of the other five senses too.

The *eye** is that by which one is in the world a perceiver of the world, a conceiver of the world.

S 35.116

What does science say to this? Neurophysiology says that electromagnetic waves hit the eye; there they are transformed into electrical impulses or chemical messenger substances that travel via the nerves into the brain where they trigger neuronal thunderstorms that are interpreted as images and so on.

Beyond that nobody really knows how electricity in grey brain matter is transformed into consciousness of images – the seer, the perceiver of the world, does not even make an appearance in this narrative. Not that science has thus transcended the conceit “I am”, it has simply left out the human being who could claim “I am”. Neurophysiology is not really suited to an explanation of seeing; it is not even suited to the overcoming of all suffering.

Some traditions of Hinduism propose a model comprised of different layers of personality, of both a temporal and an eternal perceiver of the world. On the periphery lies the layer of the impermanent body of the flesh, including its sense organs; then further in the likewise impermanent more subtle ethereal layer, which includes the sense faculties; next comes the conventional mental layer which receives the mental images. And at the innermost core rests the unmoved eternal soul, the primordial ground, the true Self, ātman.

This model is certainly helpful in the search for the true Self. Variations of such deliberations found their way into some Buddhist

traditions – minus the ātman – and have even been consulted by some interpreters of the Buddha’s teaching. They stress that when the Buddha used the word “eye”, he actually meant the process or sense of seeing, the mental eye, the mental part of the act of seeing, the “seer” who “resides” in the eye of flesh. Whenever the Buddha talked about the eye of flesh, so they claim, he used a different word.

The ordinary amateur phenomenologist indeed experiences him- or herself as the “seer”, one who looks or peeks or peeps out into the world through a pair of windows below the forehead.^z But somehow the seen world is also “in here”. This is nothing new; we can contemplate on all four application-bases both internally and externally. And anyway, the eye as a separate material component cannot be derived from the phenomenon “seeing”.

Such a separation between a material organ and a mental sense faculty is not to be found in the discourses (however, a few remarks of mine on the topic have been included in the glossary). To regard body and mind as a pair of opposites is an idealist position which I have addressed a number of times in this book already. Adopting this position brings no advantages, but rather a certain amount of danger:

That which the seer (or the seeing or the sense of seeing) sees, is in fact the miserable impermanent material world. By claiming a wholly different mode of being, something better, namely the mental one, the one of the spirit, the seer is again striving for a place “outside of all this”. To be “off the hook”. Yet again a strategy of craving for being.

We do better if we understand the body as an experiencing body; then we can think of the eye as an organ that is gifted with the eye faculty and can see.

z Of course, the professional philosophers have described this in much better, more precise and more detailed ways; but even they do not speak of a separation of the fleshy organ (eye) and its activity (seeing).

Fettering senses

So, how does seeing come about? And what is the fetter that is to be understood in the context of the eye (and the other senses)?

Dependent on the eye and forms, eye-consciousness arises. The meeting of the three is contact. Contact-conditioned is feeling. What one feels, that one perceives. What one perceives, that one thinks about. What one thinks about, that one proliferates. From what one proliferates as the source, concepts&perceptions of *proliferation** overwhelm a man with respect to past, future, and present forms cognizable through the eye.¹¹⁰

M 18

Not an over-abundance of explanation of how seeing “works” here. It seems that it is dispensable, not part of the topic of “suffering and how to overcome it”.

I wish to forgo an explanation here as to what it means to be overwhelmed by concepts&perceptions of proliferation. It doesn’t sound good though, does it? This “source” is given as the cause of all conflicts in the world. But it gets even worse:

Dependent on the eye and forms, eye-consciousness arises. The meeting of the three is contact. Contact-conditioned is feeling. Feeling-conditioned is craving. This, bhikkhus, is indeed the origin of suffering.¹¹¹

S 23. 43

But why should all this stress come into my life just because I see something? The answer comes as expected: it is yet another aspect of the special conditionality that is not seen by ordinary persons. It is not only the “possessor” who mistakenly deems herself or himself to be the boss. The same holds true for the “seer”.

The eye is not the seer, neither is eye consciousness; rather the seer arises through *taking-up* of eye, forms, eye consciousness and more.

There is only seeing, but it appears to us as if there was *somebody*, a *person*, looking or peeking or peeping out through the eyes.

And what, bhikkhus, are the things that can be taken up, and what is taking-up? The eye, bhikkhus, is a thing that can be taken up; and what there is will-passion, that is the taking-up there.

And what, bhikkhus, are the things that fetter, and what is the fetter? The eye, bhikkhus, is a thing that fetters; and what there is will-passion, that is the fetter there. [In the same way for the other five domains.]¹¹²

S 35. 109 and 110

All

“So, what do we take up now – the heaps or the domains? Or can we pick and choose?”

We take up “all”.

Bhikkhus, I will teach you the all. Listen to that ... And what, bhikkhus, is the all? It is this very eye and forms, the ear and sounds, the nose and odours, the tongue and tastes, the body and tangibles, the mind and things. This is called the all.

Bhikkhus, one who should speak thus: “Having rejected this all, I will define another all,” that person’s groundless statement would not stand up to scrutiny. Furthermore, he would fall into trouble. For what reason? Because, bhikkhus, that would not be within range (of reasoning).¹¹³

S 35.23

Another German translator of this discourse ponders in a footnote: “Why is that all? How can that be compatible with the five heaps usually being ‘all’? And what about Nibbāna, which after all is not included in the six domains. Would that make it the nothing, then?”

A possible answer would be that the khandhas are all “in every respect”. The domains are all “to its full extent”.

It looks like a wicked game. All is under the spell of the special conditionality. The board is as wide as all. Not only the fellow translator is wondering: “What could be outside of all?”

In one discourse the Buddha announces to a Brahmā, that he knows “what does not partake in the allness of the all”. A Brahmā is a kind of world spirit who pervades the whole world with his being. So it would seem natural that he thinks he knows his way around with regard to the all. He attributes a stupid, empty claim to the Buddha. The Buddha replies:

“Non-indicative consciousness, endless, radiant separate from all”, this does not partake in the allness of the all.

M 49

On another occasion the Buddha gave a similar answer to the question as to where the four main realities find no foothold, where they are no longer established:

*Non-indicative consciousness**,
endless, radiant separate from all –
there water, earth and fire too,
also air, don’t find a foothold.
There both long and short as well,
subtle, coarse, the fair and foul –
name and form without remainder,
there they are completely ended.
With cessation of consciousness
there all this is fully ended.¹¹⁴

D 11

This non-indicative consciousness, however, is not the long searched for self that hovers above everything. But rather the opposite, it is the consciousness of a liberated being that doesn’t identify with anything any more. It does not indicate, does not point to anything thus:

“That am I.” Name&form is still the content of experience, a condition for consciousness, but it is no longer a determination. It has ended, come to a standstill. Nibbāna, then, is not nothing. It is the end of the taking-up of everything – of all.

Is all 1?

It seems to be quite difficult to escape from all. That being the case, wouldn't it be better to be *united* with all, to be one with all?

This idea is appealing and widely held. Even many Buddhists believe that it is the goal of the practice. The idea that one *can* be one with all is closely connected to the concept that all *is* oneness.

Even our metaphysician Brahmin from chapter one was moved by this topic:

How about the statement, Master Gotama: “all is oneness”?

– Brahmin, “all is oneness” is the third kind of metaphysics.

– Master Gotama, is it then like this: “all is diversity”?

– Brahmin, “all is diversity” is the fourth kind of metaphysics ...¹¹⁵

S 12.48

The answer given by the Buddha, the middle approach, implies among other things: “All is conditioned. It all depends ...”

Meanwhile, we have become old hands in the field of phenomenology. Even we could answer the metaphysician's question by now, although our answer would surely not encompass everything the Buddha had had in mind. Whether all is one or many depends on our attention – which level we are being attentive to:

If I pay attention to trees on the level of trees, then they are diverse – alder, ash, beech, birch, cedar, larch, maple, oak, pine, spruce ... yew.

Viewed as forest they are *oneness*. And also: forest, prairie and desert are *one* on the level of “earth”:

Again, Ānanda, a bhikkhu – not attending to people-perception, not attending to forest-perception – attends to the singleness dependent on earth-perception. The heart jumps into that earth-perception, becomes bright, comes to standing still, and becomes settled. Just as a bull’s hide becomes free from folds when fully stretched with a hundred pegs; so too, a bhikkhu – not attending to what this earth has of any of the ridges and hollows, of rivers and ravines, of tracts of stumps and thorns, of mountains and uneven places – attends to the singleness dependent on earth-perception. The heart jumps into that earth-perception, becomes bright, comes to standing still, and becomes settled. He understands thus: “Whatever disturbances there might be dependent on people-perception, those are not present here; whatever disturbances there might be dependent on forest-perception, those are not present here. There is present only this amount of disturbance, namely, the singleness dependent on earth-perception.” He understands: “This state of perception is empty of people-perception; this state of perception is empty of forest-perception. There is only this non-emptiness, namely, the singleness dependent on earth-perception.” Thus he regards it as empty of what simply is not there. But as to what remains there he understands that thus: “There is: this is being present.” Thus, Ānanda, this too is his genuine, undistorted, pure descent into emptiness.¹¹⁶

Why on earth would we want to be one with all at all?^{aa} The idea of becoming a dewdrop in the ocean promises a sense of security, a feeling of coming home. The all is unchanging, the ocean provides a place for us ... forever.

We, as insiders of course know by now that this is a relative matter. And besides, it is not even that nice to be one with all, because all is ablaze.

Bhikkhus, all is *ablaze**. And what, bhikkhus, is the all that is ablaze? The eye is ablaze, forms are ablaze, eye-consciousness is ablaze, eye-contact is ablaze, and whatever is felt that arises with eye-contact as condition – whether pleasant or painful or neither-painful-nor-pleasant – that too is ablaze. Ablaze with what? Ablaze with the fire of passion, with the fire of hatred, with the fire of delusion; ablaze with birth, ageing, and death; with sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair, I say.¹¹⁷

S 35.28

One thousand former dreadlock ascetics, practitioners of a fire cult, listened well here. And this was sufficient to stir and shake them up, to wake them up. Each and every one of them became an arahant. Their eyes, ears, noses, tongues, bodies and minds all remained as before, unscathed.

But the fire had gone out.

aa Let me get this straight – the “we” here is merely rhetorical: *I do not* want it.

Is it diverse, then?

Striving for unity does have a meaning and significance in the practice, all the same. It is the way of wisdom and insight, which turns away from the 10 000 things and looks for general principles. And it is the way of concentration and calm, which leads to oneness of the heart. But every oneness is relative. Viewed from a higher stance it is always perceived as diversity.^{bb}

It doesn't matter anyway whether we deal with oneness, diversity or all. Fully understood from a higher level, nothing of all this is worth delighting in or taking-up.

Bhikkhus, an arahant, destroyer of the drives, who has lived the holy life, done what had to be done, laid down the burden, attained the goal, fully destroyed the fetters of being, and is liberated through right highest knowledge, *knows* oneness ... diversity ... all *from a higher level** as oneness ... diversity ... all. Having known oneness ... diversity ... all from a higher level as oneness ... diversity ... all, he does not conceive oneness ... diversity ... all. He does not conceive in oneness ... diversity ... all. He does not conceive departing from oneness ... diversity ... all. He does not conceive oneness ... diversity ... all as "mine". He does not delight in oneness ... diversity ... all. Why is that? "It is completely penetratingly known for him," I say.¹¹⁸

M 1

And it does not matter either whether we try to penetratingly know the five taking-up-heaps, name&form plus consciousness, the six main properties, the six domains or the relationship between determinations and determined things. It is a matter of taste as to which tool appeals to us, which tool suits us. *My* favourite tools are given away by the length of the respective chapters.

bb Even earth-perception is, viewed from the level of infinite space, a perception of diversity.

The Discourse – *Awakening to truth*

Again a bhikkhu abides with things thing-contemplating in terms of the seven awakening factors. And how does a bhikkhu abide with things thing-contemplating in terms of the seven awakening factors?

Here, the mindfulness *awakening factor** ... the thing-investigation awakening factor ... the energy awakening factor ... the rapture awakening factor ... the tranquillity awakening factor ... the concentration awakening factor ... the equanimity awakening factor being internally present, a bhikkhu understands: ‘The equanimity awakening factor is internally present for me’; or the equanimity awakening factor not being internally present, he understands: ‘The equanimity awakening factor is not internally present for me’; and how there is the arising of the unarisen equanimity awakening factor, and how for the arisen equanimity awakening factor there is *fulfilment** by development, that he also understands.

In this way he abides internally with things thing-contemplating ... Or else contemplating as things of origin he abides with things ... Or else ‘there is things’ mindfulness is present for him, just for the right measure of knowing and against-the-grain mindfulness. And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world.

Again a bhikkhu abides with things thing-contemplating in terms of the four noble truths. And how does a bhikkhu abide with things thing-contemplating in terms of the four noble truths?

Here a bhikkhu understands according to reality: ‘This is suffering’; he understands according to reality: ‘This is the origin of suffering’; he understands according to reality: ‘This is the cessation of suffering’; he understands according to reality: ‘This is the practice leading to the *cessation** of suffering.’

8. Truth and Reality

How do we put these tools to use? Well, for this, certain conditions are needed. That was not difficult to guess, I suppose. Just as the five hindrances are the condition, the background, for scattered unfocused states of the heart, so too, the awakening factors are the condition on the side of the good, the background for the collected, concentrated, expanded and liberated heart, free from passion, hatred and delusion. They are principles that in turn are things themselves, subject to principles or conditions. We want to understand, *how* the awakening factors arise and *how* they come to fulfilment.

Furthermore, the seven awakening factors have an *inner* context, an *inner* relationship. What this is we can gather from our hologram discourse, and it will also tell us *how* the awakening factors arise:

Bhikkhus, on whatever occasion a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating ... with feelings feeling-contemplating ... with the heart heart-contemplating ... with things thing-contemplating, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having removed greed&grief in regard to the world, for him on that occasion not neglected mindfulness is established. On whatever occasion not neglected mindfulness is established for a bhikkhu, for him on that occasion the mindfulness awakening factor is aroused, he develops it, and by development, it comes to fulfilment for him.

Abiding thus mindful, he investigates and examines that thing with wisdom, and undertakes an all around scrutiny. On whatever occasion, abiding thus mindful, a bhikkhu investigates and examines that thing with wisdom, and undertakes an all around scrutiny, for him on that occasion the thing-investigation awakening factor is aroused, he develops it, and by development, it comes to fulfilment for him.

For one who investigates and examines that thing with wisdom, and undertakes an all around scrutiny, for him active energy is aroused. On whatever occasion active energy is aroused ..., for him on that occasion the energy awakening factor is aroused, he develops it, and by development, it comes to fulfilment for him.

For one with aroused energy, rapture not of the flesh arises. On whatever occasion rapture not of the flesh arises for a bhikkhu with aroused energy, for him on that occasion the rapture awakening factor is aroused, he develops it, and by development, it comes to fulfilment for him.

For one with a raptured mind, the body becomes tranquil, the heart becomes tranquil too. On whatever occasion the body becomes tranquil and the heart becomes tranquil too for a bhikkhu with a raptured mind, for him on that occasion the tranquillity awakening factor is aroused, he develops it, and by development, it comes to fulfilment for him.

For one with a tranquil body, who is at ease, the heart becomes concentrated. On whatever occasion the heart becomes concentrated for a bhikkhu with a tranquil body, who is at ease, for him on that occasion the concentration awakening factor is aroused, he develops it, and by development, it comes to fulfilment for him.

He, as one who is equanimous, looks closely on with diligence at the heart thus concentrated. On whatever occasion a bhikkhu is one who is equanimous, looking closely on with diligence at the heart thus concentrated, for him on that occasion the equanimity awakening factor is aroused, he develops it, and by development, it comes to fulfilment for him. Bhikkhus, developed and cultivated like this, the four application-bases of mindfulness fulfil the seven awakening factors.¹¹⁹

Couldn't we have guessed? The seven awakening factors come forth whenever we contemplate the seven awakening factors as the seven awakening factors with the help of the seven awakening factors. And whenever this is developed and cultivated, the seven awakening factors come to fulfilment. (Part 1 of this book dealt with this *development*.) So the awakening factors condition the awakening factors, which condition the awakening factors, which ... just on different levels. Typical hologram yet again!

Somehow we might have the feeling that wisdom is missing out here. Okay, the thing-investigation awakening factor *contains* wisdom, but wisdom is not an awakening factor itself, is it?

No, it's even better: wisdom is the *prerequisite* for all seven of them:

Bhikkhus, having dealt with the "internal factor", I do not regard any other single factor for the arising of the seven awakening factors like this one: *wise attention penetrating to the source**. For a bhikkhu endowed with wise attention penetrating to the source, this is to be expected; he will develop and cultivate the seven awakening factors. Here, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu develops the mindfulness ... thing-investigation ... energy ... rapture ... tranquillity ... concentration ... equanimity awakening factor, which is rooted in seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, maturing in letting go.¹²⁰

S 46.49

As we already know, it is attention that decides the respective level of contemplation. And this has to be done with wisdom, for there is also the unwise, not penetrating to the source variety of attention, which views everything in the sense of "I, me, mine". Suffering thus becomes a personal possession, and by extension, an unsolvable problem, because the possessing person is part of the problem. Wise or appropriate attention, however, views everything in the sense of the four noble truths. We will arrive at those truths in a few pages.

Investigating things

We have covered the first of the seven awakening factors, mindfulness, at length already. The last five will be dealt with in the context of the noble eightfold path. But now we are interested in the thing-investigation awakening factor.^{cc}

And what, bhikkhus, is the nutriment for the arising of the unarisen awakening factor of thing-investigation and for the fulfilment by development of the arisen awakening factor of thing-investigation? There are, bhikkhus, wholesome/unwholesome things, blameable/blameless things, low/sublime things, things with dark/bright counterparts: frequent cultivation of wise attention penetrating to the source there – that is the nutriment for the arising of the unarisen awakening factor of thing-investigation, and for the fulfilment by development of the arisen awakening factor of thing-investigation.¹²¹

S 46.51

One thing that all seven awakening factors have in common, is that they are promoted by wise attention when it penetrates to the source. It is only the object of this attention that differs. The word “source”, which denotes where this attention is to penetrate to, is ambiguous. For one thing it means an origin, a condition, for another thing it means a place of discovery or reference. But “at their source” both meanings are anyway the same, i.e. the background on a higher level.

In order to distinguish dark and bright we draw a comparison. For this, as we hopefully have not forgotten yet, we need this higher

cc This is of course just an assumption of mine. Anyone not interested may well skip this chapter or even put the book away entirely. But those who have read up to this point are most likely in a wishing to disclose all this to themselves kind of mode now.

level. What we take to be the higher level, to be a place of reference, this is a question of wisdom.

Sartre regarded the possessor as the ground of being, that is, as the foundation, and at the same time condition for the possession. This is an example of an attention that takes the “I, me, mine” as a reference, as a background. *I* as the suffering person am the ground of being for *my* suffering. Sartre’s attention is not penetrating to the source.^{dd}

This is how he attends unwisely not penetrating to the source: “Was I in the past period? Was I not in the past period? What was I in the past period? How was I in the past period? Having been what, what did I become in the past period? Shall I be in the future period? Shall I not be in the future period? What shall I be in the future period? How shall I be in the future period? Having been what, what shall I become in the future period?” Or he is now internally perplexed about the present period: “Am I? Am I not? What am I? How am I? Where has this being come from? Where will it go?”

M2

The noble-disciple takes the four noble truths as a background. There suffering no longer has an owner:

He attends wisely penetrating to the source: “This is suffering”; he attends wisely penetrating to the source: “This is the origin of suffering”; he attends wisely penetrating to the source: “This is the cessation of suffering”; he attends wisely penetrating to the source: “This is the practice leading to the cessation of suffering.”¹²²

M2

Back to thing-investigation. Wise attention is good for that. And what is this wise attention attentive to? It distinguishes wholesome

dd I do not mean to disparage Jean-Paul Sartre. All who are not in higher training yet will see it that way.

and unwholesome. These are categorical qualities, that means, they cannot be further itemised or analysed or defined by something else: wholesome is wholesome, unwholesome is unwholesome.

Expressed in its most general terms, this applies to all things that are *bright/dark counterparts*. This does not simply mean that bright and dark are opposites or antagonisms, instead it refers to things that are in accordance with the principle of bright/dark, that expand and complement it. Bright/dark is the pattern of wholesome/unwholesome, sublime/low, beneficial/unbeneficial, ending suffering/causing suffering, awakening factor/hindrane, wise attention/unwise attention. Wise attention knows these differences. It is not “beyond good and evil”.

All the many questions that may arise in our practice, and that have been posed to the Buddha are mostly relative in nature: “Should I live in the forest? What kind of robes should I wear? How much concentration is good for me? May asceticism hurt?”

And the answer is: “It depends.” This answer is analytical in nature and the analysis leads on to questions that can be answered categorically: “Is it wholesome or not? Does it lead to the end of suffering or does it cause suffering?”

To be able to answer *these* questions we again have to apply wise attention. Is the frame of reference the “I, me, mine” or is it the four noble truths?

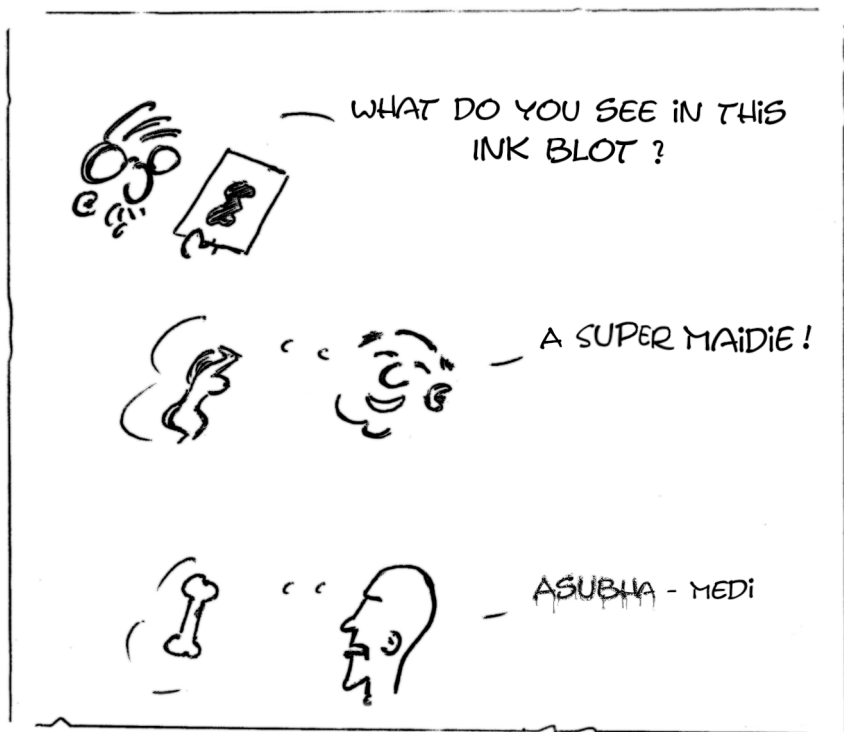
Now we can also understand how the arising of the hindrances comes to be: with unwise attention not penetrating to the source. And we understand how they are overcome and how they will no longer arise in the future: with the help of wise attention penetrating to the source.

There is, bhikkhus, the sign of beauty: frequent cultivation of unwise attention not penetrating to the source there, is the nutriment for the arising of unarisen wishing-will and for the growth and increase of arisen wishing-will.

There is, bhikkhus, the sign of non-beauty: frequent cultivation of wise attention penetrating to the source there, is the withdrawal of nutriment for the arising of unarisen wishing-will and for the growth and increase of arisen wishing-will.¹²³

S46.51

Where attention is applied, what it is directed to varies on a case-by-case basis. The suttas provide some examples. The salient point is whether attention makes things stand out against their background in a wise or in an unwise way.



Really true

So, thing-investigation discloses things and their context, their conditions. Conditions have an effect, namely, a conditioned thing. The sphere of things – in Latin “res” – is reality. In this way, thing-investigation can also be referred to as “investigation of reality”.

The sphere or fundamental property of all things then is their reality. But this reality too is embedded within a context. It has a counterpart on a higher level: truth.

The terms “truth” and “reality” are often used quite arbitrarily in normal everyday language, all muddled up as if they were interchangeable. The reason for this probably lies in our philosophical climate, something that has been shaped by a centuries-old debate: “How can a true statement *coincide* with the object of the statement?” Or to put it another way: “What is truth?”

The answers vacillate between the extremes of objectivity and idealism. Only after phenomenology had contributed its observations, were meaningful answers, which also agreed with those that we find in the Buddha’s teaching, to be found. The notion that a statement is true if it *coincides* with reality was dropped. Instead phenomenology says that truth *points* to reality or *discloses* it. And for this, *someone who points* – a sensing one, a sentient being – is necessary.

Comparing a thing with its higher, more general level, can thus be regarded as the *disclosing* of the reality of a thing: as that which it “in truth” is. This level that is higher than reality (of things), is its conformity to natural laws, its regularity, its truth.

Those of my readers who feel that I have framed this too simply can find roughly the same ideas in Heidegger’s work. But firstly a couple of hints as a “translation aid”. Those things that I call “things”, Heidegger calls “entities”. The disclosing one, the experiencing person, he calls “Dasein”.

What is to be demonstrated is solely the Being-uncovered of the entity itself – that entity in the “how” of its uncoveredness ... To say that an assertion “*is true*” signifies that it uncovers the entity as it is in itself. Such an assertion asserts, points out, ‘lets’ the entity ‘be seen’ in its uncoveredness. The *Being-true (truth)* of the assertion must be understood as *Being-uncovering*.

*‘There is’ truth only in so far as Dasein is and so long as Dasein is. Entities are uncovered only when Dasein is; and only as long as Dasein is, are they disclosed. Newton’s laws, the principle of contradiction, any truth whatever – these are true only as long as Dasein is. Before there was any Dasein, there was no truth; nor will there be any after Dasein is no more. For in such a case truth as disclosedness, uncovering, and uncoveredness, cannot be.*¹²⁴

Martin Heidegger

Now it is quite possible that we don’t like this at all, for it means, that truth is a *personal* affair. What is true *for me*, depends on how *I* disclose the things for me. As a consequence, the question whether *I* say the truth or not, does not depend on the *contents* of my statement, but rather it depends on whether the statement coincides with *my* truth. If I disclose something for myself in one way and then say it otherwise, I lie. If I say it the way I see it, then not. Even politicians say the truth if they themselves believe what they say.^{ee}

So, there is not only *one* truth, there are *many* truths. To be sure, there are truths that are more suited than others for our purpose of escaping from suffering. It depends on the state, the mode of the disclosing person. This mode, and the respective truth, are the conditions for each other. In the words of a Theo-phenomenologist of the 13th century:

ee Of course I could also lie to myself, that is, if my inner “they” intentionally ignores what I actually and “authentically” should know.

Whatever is received, is received to the mode of the receiver. ... The cognized is in the cognizing one according to the mode of the cognizing one.¹²⁵

Thomas Aquinas

If we generalise the individual cognizing one, if we climb from the mode of a single person up to a higher, more general level, then we can say:

Ordinary persons, so-called worldlings, disclose reality in the mode of worldlings. They arrive at worldly truths. Or the other way round: Disclosing according to worldly truths ensures that the discloser remains a worldling.

Those in higher training, the so-called noble ones, disclose reality in the mode of noble ones. They arrive at the noble truths. Or the other way round: Disclosing according to the noble truths makes the discloser a noble one.

Reality without truth?

Heidegger noticed that there is no truth if there is nobody (if there is no Dasein) to disclose reality (the Being). How about reality, the things, the Being? Does this also exist if nobody discloses it?

To say that before Newton his laws were neither true nor false, cannot signify that before him there were no such entities as have been uncovered and pointed out by those laws. Through Newton the laws became true; and with them, entities became accessible in themselves to Dasein.¹²⁶

Martin Heidegger

That means, apples fell from the tree even before Newton formulated the laws of gravity. But we owe him the truth of windfall: it accelerates at $9,8 \text{ m/s}^2$ towards the centre of the earth!

The topic of truth is actually not new to this book. We have repeatedly spoken about the more general quality of things. This turning towards these more general qualities or natural laws could also be regarded as the relationship between reality and the truth of things. For example, body parts are in truth elements. Bones in truth bone-ness. The body is in truth an impermanent meat loaf.

Admittedly, the Buddha's teaching deals with more weighty topics than bones and apples. What does the Buddha say about the "very deep" aspects of being?

Whether Tathāgatas arise or not, there stands this property, this *thing-steadiness**, this thing-orderliness: "All determinations are impermanent." ... "All determinations are suffering." ... "All things are not-self." The Tathāgata awakens to this, he discloses this.

Having awakened to this, having disclosed this, he makes it evident, teaches it, explains it, establishes it, reveals it, analyses it, makes it plain: "All determinations are impermanent." ... "All determinations are suffering." ... "All things are not-self."¹²⁷

A 3. 137

So, these fundamental properties or realities stand even when there is no Buddha around. Are they not dependent on experience then? Are suffering and not-self metaphysical essences inherent in the basic structure of a "self-observing universe"?

No, they too are, as realities, dependent on being experienced by a Dasein *for which* they have an effect, for which they are real. If there is no being, there is no equipment of being either. If nobody suffers, there is no suffering either.

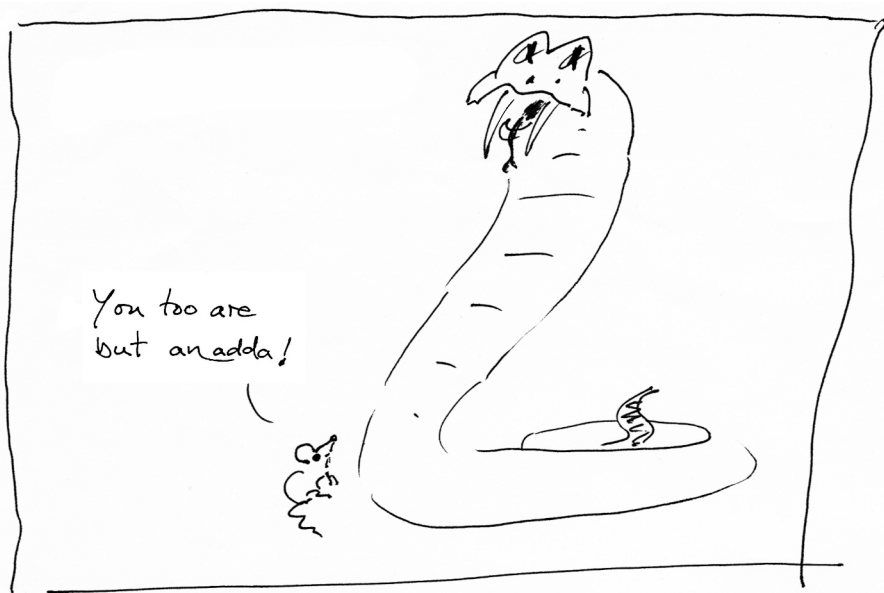
"But not-self, anattā, that is a completely *different* kind of truth," objects one not so fictitious voice. "It is the non-conventional nature of things, insubstantiality, the coreless characteristic, the emptiness of subatomic interstices, the primordial vibration beyond all measure ... This is the essence that the Buddha discovered and proclaimed

as the Truth. Suffering on the other hand, well, everyone knows it, all the other religions teach it too.”

Wrong! It makes a difference whether I simply suffer from suffering or whether I disclose it as a noble truth. Suffering from suffering is something everyone can do. And everyone does. And then the truth is: “I suffer.”

As to not-self, well, it means “not self”. In which way the perception of “self” or “not-self” is significant in the context of the noble truths, we will see later. To confuse not-self and non-existence – in the sense of a presumed higher or even absolute truth – seduces some people into ethical negligence: “Ah, never mind! It’s all anattā anyway.”

This idea even brings with it serious dangers.



The Buddha disclosed as a truth that all determinations are impermanent and suffering, and that all things are not-self. Then after that he took the trouble to talk about it. Now, truth is not something one can “give” to others. Not even a Buddha can do this. But it is possible to guide others so that they themselves can assume the mode in which they can disclose the reality in question as a truth. For this, a willingness to change oneself is indispensable. If, however, we hold the opinion that we already know it all, then the mode needed is out of reach for us.

Absolute truth?

What about the view that the Buddha taught two different kinds of truth: conventional and absolute truth? This idea is widespread. In truth, however, the Buddha spoke only truth. Whenever he spoke about things that an ordinary person could understand, he passed on what he had already disclosed for himself. For example when he explained how to keep toilets clean and tidy.^{ff} Whenever he spoke about things that only a noble one can understand, he likewise passed on what he had already disclosed for himself. But this is not what the theory of the two kinds of truth is getting at.

The concept of the absolute truth instead aims at a transcendent ultimate truth, which is hidden “behind” all ordinary truths. A truth that is not dependent on someone discovering it, but which is “detached” from conditions (this is exactly what the word “absolute” means), hovering around eternally, waiting to be discovered.

That there are ‘eternal truths’ will not be adequately proved until someone has succeeded in demonstrating that Dasein has been and will be for all eternity. As long as such a proof is still outstanding, this principle remains a fanciful contention which does not gain in legitimacy from having philosophers commonly ‘believe’ it.

^{ff} This knowledge got thoroughly lost in India in later centuries.

Both the contention that there are ‘eternal truths’ and the jumbling together of Dasein’s phenomenally grounded ‘ideality’ with an idealized absolute subject, belong to those residues of Christian theology within philosophical problematics which have not as yet been radically extruded.¹²⁸

Martin Heidegger

Heidegger indicates that there is a certain need to believe in “eternal truth”. Therefore, more informative than the question as to whether there is absolute truth or not, and what it could be, is the question *why* someone would *wish* for the existence of absolute truth.

The Absolute, call it The Truth, REALITY or whatever, is some kind of substitute God for Buddhists, Taoists, freelance Spiritualists and other godless characters. It is the best possible ground of being, the absolute reason for my existence, the proof that I indeed exist in the way I experience myself. For only something absolute can serve as a counter-object to the “idealized absolute subject”.

Every unawakened being has the feeling they are an absolute subject. But since people are different THE ABSOLUTE TRUTH also abounds in profusion. It could be esoteric obscurities, or the true Tao, about which one can’t say anything (otherwise it wouldn’t be the true Tao), or emptiness as some kind of metaphysical primordial ground (not the boring relative emptiness *of* something, as described in the suttas) or untenable thought models which are meant to “prove” that things do not really exist in reality.¹²⁹

What about Nibbāna?

About Nibbāna, the highest goal in the teaching of the Buddha, I cannot say anything from my own experience. Most of my readers will probably be in the same situation;-) Nibbāna is not a “phenomenon”, and thus a priori not a topic of phenomenology. Nevertheless some methods of phenomenology can be applied in a meaningful way to assess what the suttas say.

Is Nibbāna now the Absolute Truth, the primordial ground, the God of Buddhism?¹³⁰ There is a debate in Thailand as to whether Nibbāna is the self or whether it is not-self. Among the advocates of “pro self, contra not-self” is a group that calls itself *Dhammakāya*. They argue: “What is impermanent, that is suffering; what is suffering, that is not-self. Therefore Nibbāna, which is permanent and bliss, must be the self.” The learned rescue-corps rushes in to defend orthodoxy (Kierkegaard’s expression) and says: “Not so! All things are not-self; even the unconditioned things that are not impermanent and not suffering.”

It is conspicuous that the Buddha didn’t say anything about Nibbāna, as to it being self or not-self. And likewise that he didn’t use certain terms, with which one can describe “being”, to also describe Nibbāna. For example, I do not know of any passage in the suttas where he says that Nibbāna is “permanent”; he calls it “the constant”. But neither does he say anywhere that Nibbāna is “a thing”.

Nibbāna is the *undetermined*, but not an *undetermined thing*. A thing that is not determined, not dependent on conditions, is a “nonentity”, an absurdity.¹³¹ This cannot be. Things need a higher level, a background against which they change and move. The background is relatively permanent in comparison to the foreground-thing. This relative permanence is *part of change*. Maybe that is the reason why the Buddha didn’t call Nibbāna “permanent” (*niccam*), but rather “enduring, constant” (*dhuvam*).

Scholasticism “explains”, that when the Buddha said *determinations* he meant “conditioned things” (as mentioned already), and that with *things* he was referring to “conditioned *and* unconditioned things”, that is to say, “determinations plus Nibbāna”. This concept is dangerously wrong! Besides, the idea of an unconditioned and thus permanent *thing* just shoots itself in the foot. A permanent thing standing out against an even more permanent, more eternal ground of being – that would indeed be the long searched for self!

Therefore Nibbāna is not not-self. So is it the self then?

Self and not-self are not metaphysical essences, not properties *of* the things, but rather modes of the *experience* of things. We experience *ourselves* as self, as I, as the one who knows – someone who lives somewhere within experience (in the five khandhas) – but where? To hold on to the experience as “being self” we constantly have to feed it with content, by identifying with this or that, by taking something up, that is, our equipment of being. The trouble with all this is that our equipment – the determinations – is not permanent.

Then of course it lends itself to the taking up of something permanent (or constant) and to make it the equipment of being: “Nibbāna is mine, this possessor who has *obtained* Nibbāna am I, this ground of being for Nibbāna is my self.”

Eternal Nibbāna is meant to be the eternal ground of being for me. But in the moment I make it “my” ground of being, I am – as the owner – the ground of being for Nibbāna, and Nibbāna thereby is no longer eternal. In other words, when Nibbāna is taken-up, it is no longer Nibbāna. Anything taken-up, any equipment of being, all determinations are impermanent.¹³²

Nibbāna on the one hand, and whatever could be a “self”, or belong to a “self”, on the other, are incompatible. Nibbāna is the end of being, the ending of being a supposed “self”.

Nibbāna is cessation of being.¹³³

A 10.7

“Self or not-self, that is the question!” Why do people get so worked up about this? Just like in a religious war, it is all about the ground of being. On the one side those who would like to “own” the highest goal of the teaching, on the other side those who would like to “own” the teaching. But one cannot own Nibbāna, not even want it or crave it. One can only want and crave the end of wanting and craving.

The destruction of greed, hatred and delusion – this is called the undetermined/constant/Nibbāna¹³⁴

S 43.?

Nibbāna is neither self nor its negation, not-self. How can we comprehend it then? If Nibbāna doesn't have a ground of being above it, no background, no higher truth that discloses Nibbāna, is it the Absolute then? No, it is not absolute, because – being the uppermost level – it is connected with the lower levels. Without Nibbāna there would be no liberation. I don't know whether this can be called a "condition". The Buddha at any rate did not call it such, but rather expressed it thus:

There is, bhikkhus, the unproduced, unbecome, unmade, undetermined. If, monks there were not that unproduced, unbecome, unmade, undetermined, an escape here from the produced, become, made, determined would not be discerned. But *because* there is an unproduced, unbecome, unmade, undetermined, *therefore* an escape from the produced, become, made, determined is discerned.¹³⁵

Ud 73

For that is false, bhikkhu, that which is a falsehood-thing, and that is true, that which is a non-falsehood-thing, Nibbāna. Therefore a bhikkhu endowed in this way is endowed with the highest resolution to truth. For this, bhikkhu, is the *highest noble truth*, namely, the non-falsehoodthing Nibbāna.¹³⁶

M 140

It is the *highest truth*, because it is cessation of the being of a person, of a *Dasein*, *for whom* it could be a reality, which the person could then disclose as a truth from a higher level. But there is no person any more and therefore no higher level.

Nibbāna is not the *highest reality* (or, more popular still: the ultimate reality), because in that case there would have to be a level higher than that. Nibbāna is no reality at all in the sense of a sphere of conditionality, of a sphere of (conditioned) things.

“What, venerable sir, is the purpose of right seeing?” – “The purpose of right seeing, Rādhā, is disenchantment.” – “And what, venerable sir, is the purpose of disenchantment?” – “The purpose of disenchantment is dispassion.” – “And what, venerable sir, is the purpose of dispassion?” – “The purpose of dispassion is liberation.” – “And what, venerable sir, is the purpose of liberation?” – “The purpose of liberation is Nibbāna.” – “And what, venerable sir, is the purpose of Nibbāna?” – “You have gone beyond the range of questioning, Rādhā. You weren’t able to grasp the limit to questioning. For, Rādhā, the holy life fully lived is merging with Nibbāna, culminating in Nibbāna, ending in Nibbāna.”¹³⁷

S 23. 1

“But, lady, what is the counterpart of true knowing?” – “Liberation is the counterpart of true knowing.” – “What is the counterpart of liberation?” – “Nibbāna is the counterpart of liberation.” – “Lady, what is the counterpart of Nibbāna?” – “You have gone beyond the range of questioning, friend Visākha. You weren’t able to grasp the limit to questioning. For, friend Visākha, the holy life is merging with Nibbāna, culminating in Nibbāna, ending in Nibbāna.”¹³⁸

M 44

Such answers are not given out of a sense of piety, or for reasons of “dhammical correctness”. There is no purpose and no counterpart to Nibbāna, because there can’t be a higher level in the structure of experience (if it can still be called such at all).

This highest noble truth can neither be “obtained”, nor can it be “possessed”. Nibbāna is attained and experienced. And this does the heart good.

Nibbāna is the highest ease.¹³⁹

Dhp 204

Gradually approaching truth

Sure enough, truth is a personal affair, but that doesn't make it an arbitrary one. If we want to progress to subtle and profound things, let alone to noble truths, it is mandatory that we also *speak* the truth. Speech and thought are interconnected. When we speak lies, we constantly have to maintain a second world alongside the world of that which is true for us, a parallel universe of falsehood. Doing so we lie to ourselves and are not able to observe ourselves truthfully.^{gg}

What does it mean to speak the truth?

Householders, here someone, having abandoned telling lies, abstains from telling lies; when he has gone to court, or to a meeting, or to a gathering of his relatives, or of his guild, or of the royal family, and when he is questioned as a witness: "Come, good man, tell what you know," if he does not know, he says: "I do not know." Or if he knows, he says: "I know." If he does not see, he says: "I do not see." Or if he sees, he says: "I see." In this way he does not in full awareness speak lies for his own sake, or for another's sake, or for the sake of some worldly reward.¹⁴⁰

M41

We may notice that the sutta passage doesn't tell us *what* the good man says, as in, "he says how it *is*". Instead it tells us how it *appears* to him, whether he knows and sees something. To speak the truth for me means that I speak in a way that is in accordance with *my* truth, as it appears true *to me*, without any intention to deceive others in regard to *my* truth.

gg Ethical behaviour as a precondition for satipaṭṭhāna was mentioned at the very beginning. Most likely none of my readers speak falsehoods, and as such are not able to observe the ill effects of lying directly in the phenomenon of the lie. But maybe everyone can *imagine* what it would be like.

Everything we say should always be true for us: and this applies too to situations in which our truth is uncomfortable for ourselves or others. There are no white lies, no uttering of falsehoods for a good or worthy cause. But not everything that is true for us has to necessarily always be said.



But that's not all there is to it. The next step is the maintaining, safeguarding and protection of truth. It has to be clear to us that our truth is not necessarily the truth of all other human beings. It is important that we are aware of how, in which way, we disclose something as a truth.

If someone has faith in something, he protects truth when he says: "My faith is like this"; but he does not yet come to the definite conclusion: "Only this is true, anything else is useless." To this extent, Bhāradvāja, there is protection of truth, to this extent one protects truth, to this extent we explain the protection of truth. ... If he approves of something, he protects truth when he says:

“I approve of this”; but he does not yet come to the definite conclusion: “Only this is true, anything else is useless.” ... If he is part of a tradition, he protects truth when he says: “My tradition is like this” ... If he comes to a conclusion based on reasoning, he protects truth when he says: “My reasoning is like this” ... If he accepts a view with inspection he protects truth when he says: “My acceptance of a view with inspection is like this”; but he does not yet come to the definite conclusion: “Only this is true, anything else is useless.” To this extent, Bhāradvāja, there is protection of truth, to this extent one protects truth, to this extent we explain the protection of truth.¹⁴¹

M95

It makes a tremendous difference whether we assert both to ourselves and to others that, “It is such-and-such,” or if we say, “I read in the internet that it is supposed to be such-and-such. In the evening news they said that it is such-and-such.”

Truth is relative, personal, dependent on conditions. If we are clear about this we will have less conflicts with other people. We can accept that they too have their truth. There is no such thing as “*the* objective truth” out there.

This understanding is of the utmost importance in an age when people incriminate each other for spreading “fake news” (lies), and where people deem themselves to be “fact checkers” – an “office” which they assume by self appointment.

There are different interests and goals at play here to be sure. And seen in this light, not every bit of information we receive is of the same value. Not all people speak their truth, *especially* when it comes to their interests and goals. Even truths are based on states that may be more or less wholesome. We have to consider this when we ask ourselves whom we can trust. We do not check “facts”, but rather things, i.e. the intentions and the behaviour of those who are our potential teachers.

This, says the Buddha,^{hh} is the first measure for the awakening to truth.

“Are there in this venerable one any things based on greed, hatred or delusion such that, with a heart possessed by those things, while not knowing he might say, ‘I know,’ or while not seeing he might say, ‘I see,’ or he might stir others to some interest that would lead to their harm and suffering for a long time?” As he investigates him, he comes to know: “There are no such things based on greed, hatred or delusion in this venerable one. The bodily behaviour and the verbal behaviour of this venerable one are those of a non-greedy, a non-corrupt, a non-confused person. And the Dhamma that this venerable one teaches is profound, hard to see and hard to understand, peaceful and sublime, unattainable by mere logic, subtle, to be experienced by the wise. And it is not easy for a greedy, a corrupt, a confused person to teach this Dhamma.”¹⁴²

M95

Are those who run websites, are the programme directors and editors in the media free from greed, hatred and delusion? What kind of mental attitudes, what kind of intentions are they interested in? What kind of effect do they want to have on us? What kind of mind states do they want to promote in us? A well-meaning attitude, compassion and contentment, or conflict, ruthlessness and consumerism? Do they care for peace or do they want to stir up hatred? What kind of conclusions do we draw?

hh “According to the annotated print edition of a half rotten palm leaf manuscript of a text, according to which someone by the name of Ānanda claims to have heard that a man believed by the Buddhists to be a Buddha has said ...” This here would probably overshoot the mark of what “protection of truth” means.

This is not to say that there is only the bad in this world, or that we are surrounded by nothing but enemies. The good is rare, but we must not be blind to it either.

When he investigates him and regards him purified from things based on greed, hatred and delusion, then he places faith in him; filled with faith he visits him; visiting him he gets close to him; getting close to him he listens closely; as one who listens closely, he hears the Dhamma; having heard the Dhamma, he keeps it in mind. He examines the meaning of the things he has kept in mind; when he examines their meaning, he accepts those things with inspection; when there is acceptance of those things with inspection, will is brought up; as one with brought up will, he tries out; having tried out, he scrutinises; having scrutinised, he strives; as one of resolute striving, he realises with the body the highest truth and sees it by penetrating it with wisdom. To this extent, Bhāradvāja, there is awakening to truth, to this extent one awakens to truth, to this extent we explain the awakening to truth. But so far there is no attainment of truth.¹⁴³

M95

Better truths are not handed out freely, especially not by the media. We have to work at it in order to get them. Wise attention to the dark/bright counterparts, and effort are needed.

The exercise, development, cultivation of those same things is the attainment of truth. To this extent, Bhāradvāja, there is attainment of truth, to this extent one attains truth, to this extent we explain the attainment of truth.¹⁴⁴

M95

The Discourse –

Analysis of the truth of suffering

And what, bhikkhus, is the noble truth of suffering? Coming-into-the-world is suffering; ageing is suffering; *dying** is suffering; sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair are suffering; association with the unloved is suffering, separation from the loved is suffering, not getting what one wants is suffering; taken together, the five taking-up-heaps are suffering.

And what, bhikkhus, is *coming-into-the-world**? The coming-into-the-world of these or those beings into this or that group of beings, their coming-here, entry, coming-forth, appearance of the heaps, receiving of the domains – this is called coming-into-the-world.

And what, bhikkhus, is ageing ... dying ... sorrow ... lamentation? ⁱⁱ

And what, bhikkhus, is pain? Bodily pain, bodily discomfort, painful, uncomfortable feeling produced by bodily contact – this is called pain.

And what, bhikkhus, is grief? Mental pain, mental discomfort, painful, uncomfortable feeling produced by mental contact – this is called grief.

And what, bhikkhus, is despair? ...

And what is the suffering of association with the unloved? ...

And what is the suffering of separation from the loved? ...

And what is the suffering of not getting what one wants? ...

And what, bhikkhus, are, taken together, the five taking-up-heaps, that are suffering? They are: the form taking-up-heap, the feeling taking-up-heap, the perception taking-up-heap, the determinations taking-up-heap, the consciousness taking-up-heap. These are called, taken together, the five taking-up-heaps that are suffering.

This is called the noble truth of suffering.

ii The omitted passages are to be found in Part 3.

9. Suffering Suffering

Now we might well sense a contradiction here. At first it was said that truth is a personal affair – and we’ve been practising from this point of view since the beginning of the book, having understood that we are not to exclude the experiencer from contemplating experience. And now the personal truth “I suffer” is to be replaced by the noble truth “this is suffering”. Isn’t this backsliding into objective thinking? Or are the four noble truths facts of life after all, “what is the case”?^{jj}

No, they are not facts that stand alone for themselves irrespective of whether they are being experienced or not. Neither are they metaphysical characteristics of being which “pervade everything”. They are truths: they disclose a reality, namely, suffering. And they disclose suffering to the one suffering in a way that ends suffering. That’s why they are so noble.

Here we leave the province of philosophy for good. But we must not forget that we wouldn’t have made it up to this point if we had excluded the suffering subject right from the outset.

Bhikkhus, this Dhamma is *visible here&now**, timeless, *inviting verification**, *leading onward**, to be experienced by the wise *for themselves**.¹⁴⁵

M 38

The suffering subject is interrelated with these truths. One has to see them, work with them in order for their liberating effect to unfold:

The noble truth of suffering *is to be completely penetratingly known*; the noble truth of the origin of suffering *is to be abandoned*; the noble truth of the cessation of suffering *is to be realised*; the noble truth of the practice leading to the cessation of suffering *is to be developed*.¹⁴⁶

S 56.29

jj Fact is that they are sometimes *called* such, mostly by learned authors who are trying to interpret the Buddha’s teaching in terms “everyone can understand”.

This mode of disclosing – completely penetratingly knowing, abandoning, realising, developing – marks the difference between the thing-orderliness (or thing principle) that “all determinations are suffering” and the noble truth of suffering. This quartet looks suspiciously like a hologram. If one sees a part of it one will see the whole picture:

Bhikkhus, one who sees suffering also sees the origin of suffering, also sees the cessation of suffering, also sees the practice leading to the cessation of suffering. One who sees the origin of suffering also sees suffering, also sees the cessation of suffering, also sees the practice leading to the cessation of suffering. One who sees the cessation of suffering also sees suffering, also sees the origin of suffering, also sees the practice leading to the cessation of suffering. One who sees the practice leading to the cessation of suffering also sees suffering, also sees the origin of suffering, also sees the cessation of suffering.¹⁴⁷

S 56. 30

A hologram doesn't care which side it is being viewed from.

The mind sent outside is the origin of suffering.
 The result of the mind sent outside is suffering.
 The mind seeing the mind is the path.
 The result of the mind seeing the mind is cessation.¹⁴⁸

Atulo Bhikkhu (Luang Pū Dūn)

Heaps of examples

The four noble truths are categorical teachings, meaning they cannot be split up or itemised further. They are not dependent on conditions outside of themselves. Therefore the *definition* of suffering cannot include anything else but suffering. Suffering is suffering. Full stop. But there are various *examples* of suffering, taken together as the five taking-up-heaps.

We see that pain and grief are defined as *pain*. Sorrow, lamentation and despair occur when one *is touched by one or another suffering-thing* (see the full text of the discourse on page 321f.).

Ageing is *suffering*. I have seen and suffered from this for the past 30 years or so. I have encountered illness all my life. The expression “Dying hurts” is even to be found in a song. But when I think about it, I suffer with the thought of death being a possibility “not to be outstripped” right now: I could die before this book is finished, and I might reappear as a book bug. (Those who are reading these lines here now will know that at least in *this* regard it turned out all right.)

But *why* is ageing suffering? The unabridged definition can be found on page 321: frailty, brokenness (e.g. of the teeth), greying, wrinkling of the skin, decline of life-force, deterioration of faculties. Nobody doubts that this is suffering. Everybody *suffers* from it. But what *in truth* is ageing?

Ageing is explained with the aid of examples. These are interchangeable. Someone who from a young age hasn’t had any teeth can’t suffer from broken teeth. But all of these examples deal with change, and more precisely, the kind of change that we *don’t want*. The same goes for illness and dying.

For beings who are things of ageing ... of illness ... of dying, the *wanting** arises thus: “Oh, may we not be things of ageing ... of illness ... of dying, and may ageing ... illness ... dying not approach us.” But this of course is

not to be achieved by wanting. This is the *suffering* of not getting what one wants.

A stone changes too, it gets furrows and cracks, breaks, crumbles away, but it wouldn't cross anyone's mind to say that a stone ages. The stone doesn't care, this we can quite safely assume. But *we* are *things* of ageing and the such. Ageing and the such are our conditions, our determinations. They determine us as the would-be owners – yes, even of such unpleasant things as ageing and dying.

That there are determinations *at all* is the condition for there being consciousness *at all*. (We would like to have it the other way round because that's exactly what determinations do to us.) A stone has no consciousness because it has no determinations. A stone doesn't claim anything. And therefore a stone doesn't suffer.

Consciousness has determinations as its source, determinations as its origin, determinations as its production, determinations as its coming forth.

This quote has been seen before.

Only a sensing being, a sentient being, can suffer; a being that can bring a lack into the world, into its own being or existence. This *lack* is a wanting to have it otherwise, to have it different to the way it is.

Just as any falling apple is an example of Newton's laws, so too, *these* determinations (of suffering) are examples of the thing-orderliness that *all* determinations are suffering – wanting, lacking, imperfect.

When one contemplates the world, one contemplates suffering. When one contemplates suffering, one contemplates the world. When one contemplates determinations, one contemplates suffering. When one contemplates suffering, one contemplates determinations. [...] All of this, without exception, has one and the same meaning.¹⁴⁹

Khemapatto Bhikkhu (Luang Pū Lā)

The birth channel

There is one example that is still missing: *coming-into-the-world is suffering*. The Pāli term here, *jāti*, is usually translated as “birth”. Whether this is correct or not depends on what birth is meant to *mean*. I have gone for the translation “coming-into-the-world” because there is the risk that the word “birth” might simply be glossed over – “Yes, I know, I’ve got it” – and the salient point gets missed.

Is birth an event, which in my case now dates back more than 66 years, a point of time *in the past*? Or is it something that takes place *now*? The answer to this question is of crucial importance for our understanding of the noble truths. Is suffering something that arises from, or consists of, a chain of interlinked *temporal events*? Or is suffering a structural problem, something that happens *now* and has to be solved *now*?

Let’s examine the notion that “birth” signifies the beginning of this life, the delivery that took place back then. And just because at this point we have gone beyond the realm of phenomenology, this does not imply that we have to put aside our phenomenological tools: “*Why is birth suffering?*”

There is talk of birth trauma. I was personally present at more than two dozen deliveries, and can testify that most babies cry after birth. Most mothers groan while giving birth. This proves that birth is suffering – it’s as clear as day, isn’t it?

No, not at all! My observation is like that of the neurologist previously quoted. It is objective. I know nothing of the suffering of the delivering woman, of the suffering of the children. I do not suffer from my own delivery, even if some therapists may claim to the contrary. I can’t even remember it.

Our learned rescue-corps raises an objection: “If you hadn’t been born you could not suffer. Your birth is the condition for your being.” And as proof they cite certain passages from the suttas like this one:

Then indeed, bhikkhus, the thought arose for the bodhisatta Vipassī: “When there is what, there is ageing& dying? What-conditioned is ageing&dying?” Then indeed, bhikkhus, based on wise attention penetrating to the source, disclosure with wisdom came to the bodhisatta Vipassī: “When there is birth, there is ageing&dying. Birth-conditioned is ageing&dying.”

D 14

This again is an “objective” observation (“*Everyone* can see that *you* are there.”) connected with an inference (“That means you suffer because you were born.”). But apart from that I wonder (and maybe other people feel the same way):

Is it really necessary to practise for aeons as a bodhisatta in order to finally disclose with wisdom the reality that everyone who was born will age and die? Or is it possibly about something more subtle? And then indeed we read further in the same discourse:

Then indeed, bhikkhus, the thought arose for the bodhisatta Vipassī: “When there is what, there is birth? What-conditioned is birth?” Then indeed, bhikkhus, based on wise attention penetrating to the source, disclosure with wisdom came to the bodhisatta Vipassī: “When there is being, there is birth. Being-conditioned is birth.”

The learned rescue-corps, which just a short while ago asserted that “birth-conditioned is being,” now tries to explain it away by claiming that “being” in this context means *becoming* – pregnancy or so.

We shall let the discussion be. It will take us nowhere, because it is starting from two different, mutually incompatible standpoints. The next chapter will briefly shed some more light on them. A *linguistic* discussion of the translation of *jāti* can be found in the glossary.

Everything else in this book is based on the premise that *jāti*, *coming-into-the-world*, is something we busy ourselves with “all the time”. It is the channel by which we receive suffering.

Navigation of taking-up

Why can coming-into-the-world, ageing, dying, association with the unloved, separation from the loved and so on be taken together as follows: “*The five taking-up-heaps are suffering*”? It is because the emphasis is on the *taking-up*: we want to be the ground of being for the five khandhas, the one who takes up, the possessor. We want to be the boss, to be able to decree:

“Let my form ... feeling ... perception ... determinations ... consciousness be thus; let my form ... feeling ... perception ... determinations ... consciousness not be thus.”

S 22.59

But we are not the ground of being for the heaps, rather it is exactly the opposite: taking up the heaps is the ground, the reason for Dasein, for existence, for being. The five heaps are our equipment of being – determinations each and every one of them. We dealt with their devious nature in detail in the chapter on the nature of things. By the way, the bodhisatta Vipassī also disclosed this at the time:

When there is taking-up, there is being. Taking-up-conditioned is being.¹⁵⁰

D 14

Taking-up is the same as identification. We try to take the five khandhas to be our “self”. “I, the possessor” has to be somewhere in my experience, viz. the five khandhas, in the seen, the heard, the experienced etc.! The uninstructed person regards all this thus:

“This is mine, this one I am, this one is my self.”

This quote has also been seen before.

And since this identification is impossible, any attempt is suffering:

But because form ... feeling ... perception ... determinations ... consciousness are indeed not-self, form ... feeling ... perception ... determinations ... consciousness

lead to affliction, and it is not to be gained in regard to form ... feeling ... perception ... determinations ... consciousness: “Let my form ... feeling ... perception ... determinations ... consciousness be thus; let my form ... feeling ... perception ... determinations ... consciousness not be thus.”¹⁵¹

S 22. 59

As we now know *what* all we can take up – namely, all – let us take a look at *how* taking-up takes place, by which means taking-up “navigates”.

Friends, there are four kinds of taking-up – taking-up of wishing, taking-up of view, taking-up of habit&task, taking-up of self-image.¹⁵²

M 9

Nowhere in the suttas do we find descriptions of these four kinds of taking-up. But we do find indications that taking-up of self-image plays a prominent role, because even seekers from outside the teaching&guidance of the Buddha can, in some circumstances, penetrate the first three kinds or ways of taking-up (*Cūlasihanāda Sutta*, M 11). Wishing-will for instance is temporarily suspended in deep meditation, something that is also accessible to those of different “creeds”. Thus, transcending and understanding taking-up of wishing from a higher standpoint is possible, even without being a noble-disciple.

Taking-up of view and taking-up of habit&task are likewise able to be understood by seekers of other denominations. The latter, in Pāli *sīlabbatupādāna*, however, is not understood by many *Buddhists*, who entertain the notion that:

“*Sīlabbatupādāna* means ‘attachment to rules and rituals’. It comes with the idea that rituals are the way to Nibbāna.”

I wish! Then it would be really easy to get rid of taking-up. Simply don’t follow any rules and don’t perform any rituals, let go of all that – and before you know it, whoop, taking-up is gone.

People who believe in an almighty God wouldn't face this problem in the first place, since they don't want to go to Nibbāna anyway, they'd rather go to heaven! And the proverbial drunkard and whore-monger would have an even better chance, because he spends no time at all racking his brains about heaven, let alone Nibbāna.

Unfortunately taking-up of habit&task is more deeply rooted. It is one of several ways in which we try to define what we are. Even the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche observed that a human being cannot live without a task.

Taking-up of self-image, in Pāli *attavādupādāna*, has been penetrated only by the Buddha and his *noble* disciples, it is the quintessence of taking-up. On one occasion, after surveying his bhikkhus, the Blessed One said:

Good, bhikkhus. I too do not see any taking-up of self-image, where sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair would not arise for someone taking up that taking-up of self-image.¹⁵³

M 22

Here we notice that taking-up of self-image is taken up itself. It has to be like that because it is included in the taking-up-heaps. One who takes up *taking-up of self-image* does, strictly speaking, not just cling to a self-image, but also to the *belief in a self-image*, since in reality no self can be found that *could* be taken up. Here the recursive structure of experience (of suffering) becomes evident – it is the reason why liberation from it is so difficult.

And it gets even more difficult if someone takes *attavādupādāna* to mean 'attachment to the teaching of Ātman, the eternal Soul'. If this was what the Buddha meant, only Hindus and esoterics, who have such a teaching, would suffer. But no, all unawakened beings suffer: they all have a "teaching" of their *own* self – a self-image.

Suffering is neither bad luck, nor God-ordained, nor a fruit of former actions, rather it has a condition in the present, a principle, an origin.

The Discourse –

Analysis of the truth of the origin

And what, bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the origin of suffering? It is this craving that brings further being, accompanied by delectation&passion and delights here and there – namely, *craving for wishing, craving for being, craving for potential being**.

And this craving, where does it arise, where does it settle down? Whatever in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving arises, there it settles down.

What in the world is interesting and appealing? The eye in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving arises, there it settles down. The ear ... The nose ... The tongue ... The body ... The mind in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving arises, there it settles down.

Forms ... Sounds ... Odours ... Flavours ... Tangibles ... Things.../ Eye-consciousness ... Ear-consciousness ... Nose-consciousness ... Tongue-consciousness ... Body-consciousness ... Mind-consciousness .../ Eye-contact ... Ear-contact ... Nose-contact ... Tongue-contact ... Body-contact ... Mind-contact .../ Feeling produced by eye-contact ... ear-contact ... nose-contact ... tongue-contact ... body-contact ... mind-contact.../ Perception of forms ... Perception of sounds ... Perception of odours ... Perception of flavours ... Perception of tangibles ... Perception of things .../ Intention of forms ... Intention of sounds ... Intention of odours ... Intention of flavours ... Intention of tangibles ... Intention of things .../

Craving for forms ... sounds ... odours ... flavours ... tangibles ... things in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving arises, there it settles down.

Thought/Sustained thought of forms ... sounds ... odours ... flavours ... tangibles ... things in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving arises, there it settles down.

This is called the noble truth of the origin of suffering.

10. Special Conditionality

Part 1 of this book already established that in the context of the origin of suffering the Buddha spoke about a *special conditionality*, namely, *dependent co-arising*. Sometimes the discourses expound this conditionality in greater detail, and sometimes in lesser detail. And it can be seen in its most concise form on the page opposite: the origin of suffering is craving.

This statement is sometimes expanded to also include the condition for craving: ignorance.

Bhikkhus, craving for being is with nutriment, I say. It is not without nutriment. And what is the nutriment for craving for being? “Ignorance,” should be said.¹⁵⁴

A 10.62

This conditional relationship between ignorance, craving and suffering is elaborated on in detail in many sutta passages: with either five, nine, ten, twelve or more factors. We will often come across a formula containing twelve constituents: actually so often that some people think that *this* formula is the *principle* of dependent co-arising. But it is in fact only an *example* of the principle of special conditionality. The principle itself being:

When there is this, this is. With the arising of this, this arises, that is ...¹⁵⁵

M 34

... and then follows a list of – mostly twelve – conditional relationships. These twelve appear in many discourses:

And what, bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the origin of suffering? Ignorance-conditioned is determinations; determination-conditioned is consciousness; consciousness-conditioned is name&form; name&form-conditioned is the sixfold domain; sixfold domain-conditioned is contact; contact-conditioned is feeling; feeling-conditioned is craving; craving-conditioned is taking-up;

taking-up-conditioned is being; being-conditioned is coming-into-the-world; coming-into-the-world-conditioned, ageing&dying, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair come to be. Such is the origin of this whole heap of suffering. This is called the noble truth of the origin of suffering.¹⁵⁶

A 3.62 (PTS Nr. 61)

But why does it say, “when there is this, this is”? Isn’t that a tautology, a self-affirming statement? Why use “this” twice? Why not, “when there is this, that is”?

Sure, it sounds a bit strange in English, but that’s as is written in the suttas, and for good reason: namely that both *are present*. The expanded meaning being: “When there is this *here* (present), then there is that *here* (present) – not: that *yonder, over there* (absent)!” This phrasing emphasises the simultaneity, or rather, non-temporality of the conditional relationship. Furthermore it points out that all the fuss, as always, is about the same old rubbish:

Only suffering comes to be,
Suffering stands and falls away.
Nought but suffering comes to be,
Nothing but suffering ceases.¹⁵⁷

S5.10

The difference between this₁ and this₂ is no longer an alien concept to us. It is the same, just on different levels. This₁ is the *condition* for this₂, that is, on a higher, more general level: When there is this forest (exemplified by trees), this tree is (exemplifying forest). No forest, no forest-tree.

Now this is still a very ordinary conditionality, not the special one, not the particular one that the Buddha discovered. But without having understood the non-temporal structural principle of ordinary conditionality, any understanding of the special one, dependent co-arising (paṭiccasamuppāda), is off the cards. When there *is* this, this *is* (or, what in Nibbāna’s name: that *is*).

The litmus test

Most readers have probably come across texts that assert that the teaching of paṭiccasamuppāda was the Buddha's way of explaining "how rebirth works". Such interpretations take it for granted that the twelve relationships mentioned above are all links in a temporal causal chain or succession: cause and *subsequent* effect – today intoxication, tomorrow hangover.

Sure, there are many different ways of explaining paṭiccasamuppāda, but they all have to pass the litmus test – the crucial question: "Do you believe in non-temporality, pray tell?"

The principle of a *non-temporal structure of conditions* is: "When there is this, this is. *With the arising* of this, this arises."

Whereas the principle of a *temporal causal succession* is: "When this *has ceased*, that arises. *After the cessation* of this, that arises."

Explanations of "the quantum mechanics of rebirth" or of "the Buddha's teaching on the flux of life and wandering-on" are all based on scholarly doctrines that presume to know better than that which has been handed down to us in the suttas.¹⁵⁸ That these doctrines have been around for a very long time is sometimes cited as an argument for their authenticity. But their age doesn't make them any better.

With scripts like those, we find ourselves in a totally different film. One in which the terms there play different roles to those in this book: even different to the scholarly exegesis of other contexts of the teaching. The following summary of the so-called "three life theory" is meant to serve as a means to make identification easier (key terms are in italics). I will forgo any discussion here. Those readers who have made it up to this point are mature enough, informed enough to decide for themselves *which* book they should want to put down.

Among the several screenplays there are certain variations. Some may not speak of three lives, but the principle remains constant.

It is all about sequences and *processes*, about *kamma*, *cause and effect*, the linking of past, present and future. The screenplay goes something like this:

First scene: “the past (previous life)”:

Ignorance causes *kammically effective volitional formations*. These in turn become the cause for the *re-linking rebirth consciousness*.

Second scene: “the present (this life)”:

This rebirth consciousness enters *mind and body* (or *mind and matter*). These receive the six senses. The *sense process* causes contact with the sense objects. This gives rise to feeling. If one *reacts to feeling*, craving arises. Craving *leads to clinging*.

Third scene: “the future (next life)”:

Clinging turns into the cause for becoming (pregnancy). This *leads to rebirth*. Because one is reborn ... (We’ve already covered that one.)

The individual links in this movie are completely different in meaning to those in this book. This is not by chance, seeing as they have to fit the temporal interpretation. That they don’t fit into other contexts doesn’t worry the movie makers in the least.

I just wonder: “What can I do *now* about my suffering, if the cause for it is supposed to lie in the past?”

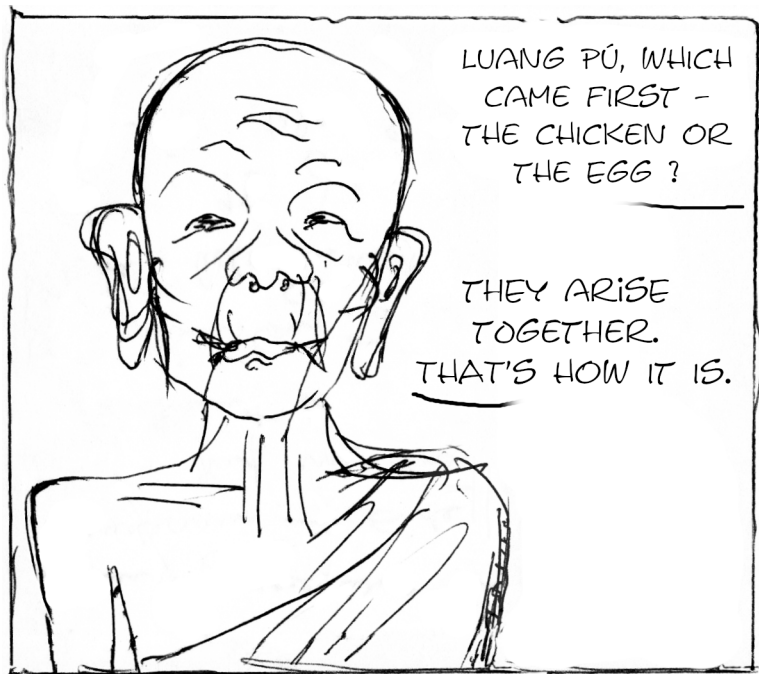
The script suggests the following solution: “Prevent any ‘reaction’ to feeling by applying extra keen mindfulness. In this way the arising of craving is prevented. And this prevents future rebirth. Freedom from suffering is attained as soon as the liberated one dies, is dead for good and forever, and without rebirth, the causes for future suffering are no longer created.”

Well, nihilism is the other side of objectivity. The suttas, however, call the state of freedom from suffering the *deathless*.

Another question of vital importance goes completely by the board: Why do I suffer *now* if I have craving *now*?

Here we have a prime example of the disinterested attitude of scholasticism insofar as it allows craving as the *origin of suffering* to be a non-temporal condition, but at the same time asserts that this has nothing to do with craving in the context of dependent co-arising. Dependent co-arising and the truth of the origin of suffering, however, are one and the same, as we read four pages ago.

The learned, scientific approach does not carry out research in the heart, but rather arrives at its findings through means of historical comparison. This approach certainly does have its place when it comes to history, but not when it is about investigating the personal problem of suffering. This method then becomes inauthentic. Instead of asking “what does dependent origination mean for *my* situation,” the question turns into, “how have ‘*they*’ understood this teaching over the centuries?”



How does the Master view special conditionality?¹⁵⁹

The simile of the sunglasses

Non-temporality does not describe a before&after, or an arising and subsequent vanishing. It describes a state, a structure. Nothing is *happening* there!

Objection: “But suffering does happen! It is also temporal! There *is* something happening, happening to me. And ageing and death are not here yet, not happening right now, they are yet to arrive.”

That’s absolutely right! Suffering is a mode, a state in which events of suffering do happen, namely, by “encountering one or another misfortune” or by being “touched by one or another suffering-thing” (see pages 321 ff.) The standard description of dependent co-arising takes this into account. It always begins with the phrasing: “X-conditioned (is) Y, Y-conditioned (is) Z ...”^{kk} This is the non-temporal structure. But then this follows:

Coming-into-the-world-conditioned, ageing&dying, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair *come to be*.

The *verb* (in German: *Zeitwort*, “time-word”) “to come to be” (*sambhavati*) denotes something temporal. *First* something is not there, *then* it comes to be. This “intersection of non-temporality and temporality”, or “branching off into the temporal”, can be found in other formulations of dependent co-arising as well (e.g. in D 15). A simile should elucidate this point – the simile of the sunglasses:

The pair of sunglasses is the structure of experience. As long as we have them on our nose we see everything that is happening with a darkened tint. That which is happening is temporal. It comes and goes. But the sunglasses remain unchanged. They are timeless, not temporal, eternal. They are so close to us that we do not even notice their presence. And so we blame the things that we see through them for being so dark.

kk The verb “is” (*hoti*) doesn’t actually appear in the Pāli, but it is implicit. The ad-verb “conditioned” (*paccayā*) points to it. But it is a verb expressing an ontological structure, not a process.

With mindfulness alone, there is nothing that can be done about this. We can watch everything with the sharpest precision, right down to the minutest detail, every micro change, every subatomic movement. But our effort is misdirected. It remains dark.

Speculation as to whether these dark things objectively exist, or whether they are just an illusion won't help either.

We need "first aid" from the outside, from someone who tells us that we are wearing sunglasses: "You are wearing sunglasses." Then it is up to us to consider this information: "Might it be possible that sunglasses are the origin of this darkness? Should I try to take them off?" We would still be faced with the difficult task of taking off sunglasses that we can't even see. Even recognising the darkness is difficult for someone who doesn't have brightness as a comparison. Could we even deem it possible that there is something to it all – this idea of sunglasses?

Or would we prefer to compare this information with other information in order to verify its contents before pulling ourselves together and dealing with such sunglasses? We could carry out studies in order to find out exactly how many different types of sunglasses there are, how they developed over the centuries, or all the things one can see through sunglasses.

It takes the courage of humility to acknowledge that there is something wrong with us, and that we do not even know exactly what it is. But if we have had enough of this darkness we just might be prepared to listen closely. And then we will be willing to make the effort to take off the sunglasses.

Taking off the sunglasses has two aspects. It is a *process in time*, it takes place at a certain point in time. And it is the replacement of one *timeless structure* with another: a clear, bright vision.

When the sunglasses have been taken off, not only does the timeless structure of seeing change, those temporal things happening in time, which we will then see, change too. They cease to be dark.

What is so special about this conditionality?

Dependent co-arising, the origin of suffering, is difficult to see. The Buddha considered this right after he had awakened to it, and by doing so had abandoned it (or vice versa). The difficulty lies therein that this conditionality is a *special* one. It implies that as long as it exists, it cannot be seen, i.e. as long as the origin of suffering is present. And that is exactly *why* it is a special or extraordinary conditionality. The origin of suffering contains a blemish – or more precisely, a lack. In the Buddha’s teaching this lack is called ignorance.

That which is not-knowing about suffering, not-knowing about the origin of suffering, not-knowing about the cessation of suffering, not-knowing about the practice leading to the cessation of suffering – this, friends, is called ignorance.¹⁶⁰

M9

This ignorance, this lack of knowing, is the condition that makes the special conditionality so special:

Ignorance-conditioned is determinations, determination-conditioned is consciousness.

Actually, with this enough has been said. The lack or mistake, is that through this ignorance things become determinations. The dual role of the determinations has already been dealt with in detail in the “Possessed possessor” chapter. They are conditions that in regard to the one who experiences them, are seen only as conditioned things, not as conditions. It is precisely this wrong view, or vision, that *makes* them determinations. They are seen as if they were conditioned by consciousness – as its “possession”. But it is exactly the other way around. They are the condition for consciousness.

Because determinations are seen as conditioned things, as subordinate to “the One omnipresent consciousness” which supposedly always stands “behind” all things, behind the multitude of “possibilities of possessing”, determinations always appear in the *plural*, thus:

“Ignorance-conditioned are *determinations*.” But since “determinations” is *the* condition for consciousness, we can also see it in this way: “Ignorance-conditioned *is* determinations”, meaning that *there is* “determinations” as such, only when they *are not seen* as such. And when “there is determinations”, then there is “determination-conditioned is consciousness”. Consciousness in the context of the origin of suffering – suffering-consciousness – can only be, when it “has” determinations to which it can point.

Every natural law or principle is a conditioned thing in and of itself, a phenomenon, the principle or truth of that can be disclosed from the respective level above it. The principle of consciousness is that it is “determination-conditioned”. But since we do not regard dependent co-arising as a *sequence of different parts or components*, but rather as the *structure* of the origin of suffering, as *always the same* so to speak, simply advancing from the more general to the more specific in our contemplation, we can also say: “Determination-conditioned” is not only the principle of consciousness, but also of everything that follows. Therefore “determination-conditioned” is *the same* as dependent co-arising (paṭiccasamuppāda), the special, extraordinary conditionality (idappaccayatā).

When observation turns towards itself, when the “observer”, the “subject”, tries to see itself, contradictions arise. One aspect of this is the phenomenon that the observer always “skives off”, whenever feeling watched (see the observations on page 110). We can try to analyse the observer in terms of “impermanent mental processes” in ever so clever ways – but yet again the one who analyses has already gotten away. We addressed this topic in our discussion of the reflective meditations and under “name&form”. It is precisely here that worldly phenomenology fails. And precisely here where the teaching of special conditionality sets in.

In the “Presence” chapter, it was noted that consciousness feels so independent. The teaching of special conditionality, however, says to us: “No, it is not like this at all!”

Once again in other words: “The principle of special conditionality applies everywhere, in all of its conditional relationships.” This means that every “x-conditioned is” link follows the first clause, the first condition, which as such is the condition for all that follows. And this condition is “determination-conditioned”, meaning that every link, i.e. every dependent arisen thing, is determination-conditioned. Conditioned to be what? To be suffering, of course! That’s what our second noble truth here is all about.

This means that as long as the truth of the origin of suffering is not seen, then every context and the whole principle of the origin of suffering will be seen wrongly, or rather, *not at all*. In other words: “Ignorance pervades everything.” There is no possibility to crack open this structure somewhere, anywhere, not even with greatest mindfulness.

That doesn’t sound very nice, not very encouraging. The only hope is to accept the teaching of the Buddha with trust, confidence, faith – including the realisation: “I do not even know that I don’t know anything.” Any attempt to solve a problem that encompasses the totality of existence, being, Dasein, with the help of one’s own resources, one’s own cleverness, with truisms or platitudes, is doomed to failure. However, the Buddha did say that it is possible. And so we try anyway, with his guidance.

Let’s sum up what paṭiccasamuppāda entails:

1. Dependent arising is, as any conditionality, a non-temporal *conditional* structure, not a *causal* sequence of cause and subsequent effect.
2. Each respective condition is more general than the corresponding conditioned thing. The conditioned thing in turn becomes the condition for the next more specific thing. It is basically all about one and the same thing on different levels of generalisation: suffering.
3. The *special* conditionality implies that it cannot be seen as long as it stands. This may go against the grain for us and lead us down the wrong path, which itself is again an aspect of it.

The existential drama

Here an example of the principle of ordinary conditionality:

Sunshine-conditioned is brightness, brightness-conditioned is opportunity-for-writing, opportunity-for-writing-conditioned is opportunity-for-writing-this-book, opportunity-for-writing-this-book-conditioned I write this book.

Each condition is more general than the respective conditioned thing. So for example, sunshine-conditioned is also warmth. Brightness-conditioned is also opportunity-for-reading. Opportunity-for-writing-conditioned I could also write a different book.

But all the links mentioned here are sunshine-conditioned, for example: sunshine-conditioned is opportunity-for-writing-this-book. When sunshine ceases, everything else ceases too, including the temporal branching-off: I have to stop writing.

All of this, however, is just ordinary conditionality, since this writer here does not appear as part of a structure that says something about the writer himself.

Now we apply these natural laws or principles and take a more detailed look at the second noble truth. Just like the bodhisatta Vipassī, we start “from the back”.

The temporal aspect – that is, all the suffering-things that can touch us, the *plot* of the existential drama – has been dealt with in the chapter on the first noble truth. The particular *situation* in which these suffering-things actually *can* touch us is our coming-into-the-world. This is the most concrete, the most specific level – the scene *in which* the plot is acted out.

At the moment I am coming into the world as a book-writing bhikkhu. In this situation I am writing a book. Please note that I have not *come* into the world, but I am *coming* into the world.

Admittedly, in this specific situation of book-writing – in this “birth” – I am not being touched by an awful lot of sorrow, lamentation,

pain, grief and despair: but the sword of Damocles, ageing and dying, is always hovering above my head. That is a certain blemish, a certain lack. Actually it is a substantial lack (in two ways).

Coming-into-the-world is also a bringing-into-the-world. It is precisely this lack that is being brought into the world. We have already learned from Jean-Paul Sartre that a sensing being is necessary in order for a lack to come into the world. This lack is ultimately the being (creature) itself. It is lacking an objective, enduring, independent, unthreatened being (existence, Dasein).

Coming-into-the-world is only possible because being is. Being is the general possibility of any concrete coming-into-the-world. It is the stage on which, for example I, the book-writing bhikkhu, have my scene, my coming-into-the-world. It is the stage on which the drama of the specific instance of suffering is acted out.

The stage of being is a place – the place in which being is, namely, “there”. “There” is here and yonder and between the two of them. This is the stage of suffering in general. Being indeed means “the stage is the world”. Without it there is no coming-into-the-world, no scene in which any specific suffering can be acted out.

When, Bāhiya, you are not there, then, Bāhiya, you are neither here nor yonder nor between the two – just this is the end of suffering.

See Where is Here?

Nibbāna is cessation of being.

See Truth and Reality

Taking-up is the condition for the stage. By condition, however, the “ingredients” for building the place are not what is being referred to here, rather the play itself. Concrete things too can, and must, be taken up in order to create the place in which the drama of existence can be staged. But in the first place it is all about the possibility in general of bringing something onto the stage. Taking-up is this

possibility. It is the precondition for any play – the identification with a role.

This role consists of *wishing* and *wishes*, of views, habits&tasks and self-images. I identify with all the material and non-material stuff of a book-writing bhikkhu, which proves that I really am that. But first and foremost, as already mentioned, it is the belief in the image that I have of myself.

When we try to follow such an analysis of a situation like this, something that we cannot even really see, we must never forget that it is not about things occurring one after the other in a sequence. It is not: “First there is taking-up, then being, then coming-into-the-world.” It is a structure. Everything is present simultaneously here& now.

The connection between taking-up as the possibility for being in general, and of being as the possibility for the concrete coming-into-the-world, is the existential drama. At least when viewed from the standpoint of an awakened being. The non-awakened being sees it the other way round: “I am my ground of being. And if someone takes up anything here, then it is me!”

It now becomes clearer as to why the Buddha did not answer the question of a “self”: “Is there a self or not?”¹¹ It would have been meaningless to answer such a wrong, invalid, pointless question. The answer would have always been misunderstood. All that can be said here and all that the Buddha said, is: “The belief in a self-image is dependently arisen.” What is this belief and this taking-up of the belief dependent on? It is dependent on craving.

11 Authors of popular Buddhism sometimes assert that the Buddha supposedly said: “There is no self at all.” Or even worse: “I do not really exist.” At this point I can probably already save myself the trouble of commenting on this assertion.

Wanting to fix the lack

The analysis of craving in our sutta asks *where* craving arises and settles down. This is not the question as to *what* craving craves. The sutta passage describes the “field of operation” of craving; it is “all”, and in a twofold way – “to its full extent” (the six inner and outer domains) combined with “in every respect” (feeling, perception, intention, thought). (See page 175)

And *what* does craving crave? In some discourses, like for example the one quoted at the beginning of this chapter, only “being” is listed. In the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta and many other passages, craving, which is principally *always* craving for being, is expounded in more detail: as craving for wishing, craving for being, craving for potential being – kāmataṇhā, bhavataṇhā, vibhavataṇhā.

By now probably nobody would dare to raise the following objection: “But isn’t it called ‘craving for *sensual pleasures*, craving for existence, craving for *non-existence*’?”

Yes, it is often it “called” that, but this doesn’t mean that it is correct. The linguistic reasons why the translation is incorrect are provided in the glossary. We, as seasoned phenomenologists now simply ask: “Could I even crave non-existence at all?” And, if we really proceed phenomenologically, we will realise that we cannot even *imagine* non-existence, let alone crave it! Even a potentially suicidal person doesn’t want the nothing, but rather *something different* to this here.

“Nothing in itself” cannot be thought of or wished for. Seen phenomenologically “nothing” is always the background *of something* – that which this something *is not*, its *negation*.¹⁶¹

In Buddhist terms we call it “emptiness”. This emptiness is always empty “of something”, as we have read when we dealt with the question of whether everything is 1. Emptiness is the more general background that is empty of the more specific thing.

With this I have basically given away how *vibhava* is to be understood: it is the background to *this* present being, that which

this being is not, but could be – possible being, *potential* being. That we might crave *such a thing* is something we can all too well imagine. Are we not constantly getting ahead of ourselves? Constantly *pro*-jecting ourselves onto possibilities as Heidegger would say. Right indeed, it is like that *constantly*, it is a *constant*, a state.

Craving, wishing, delight, delectation and other similar terms in the Buddha's teaching are not necessarily only referring to pleasant things, to well-being and ease.

Engaged as he is in favouring and opposing, whatever feeling he feels – *whether pleasant or painful or neither-painful-nor-pleasant* – he delights in that feeling, welcomes it, and remains holding to it. For him who *delights** in that feeling, welcomes it, and remains holding to it, *delectation** arises. Now what is delectation in feelings, that is taking-up. That-taking-up-conditioned is being; being-conditioned is coming-into-the-world; coming-into-the-world-conditioned, ageing&dying, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair come to be. Such is the origin of this whole heap of suffering.¹⁶²

M 38

Most readers probably know people who gain some kind of satisfaction through inflicting pain on themselves. And in a way we all identify with unpleasant things. "I am a loser. I am a chronically ill person. I am the unemployed one. That's who I am. That's what I am." How often have I heard the statement: "I need my anger in order to feel alive."

Something unpleasant, something painful is better than the anguish of the existential gap, or the "the terror of undefined being," as another phenomenologically inclined bhikkhu has called it.

If we explore the nature of experiencing any phenomenon, we may notice that when the feeling of identity arises – a ‘me’ who is frightened, a ‘me’ who is in love, a ‘me’ who has a problem to solve – something in the heart ‘likes’ that feeling. Even in an uncomfortable state such as anger or fear, the feeling of ‘I am’, of a defined being, is something the mind locks onto and relishes. A feeling of deep gratification arises even if the experience is, on its surface, ostensibly ‘unwanted’, like a problem, a difficulty, or a struggle. Something in the heart says, ‘Phew! Now I’ve got something to *be!*’¹⁶³

Amaro Bhikkhu

It is precisely this that craving is aiming at. It is craving for *defined being*. Craving is the striving to mend a gap, to fix a lack. But the lack arises with the craving to fix a lack in the first place. So it is no wonder that as a result, we are able to even delight in unpleasant things. Because all of that is “in the world interesting and appealing”. Put in general terms, we crave for craving.

Craving for forms ... sounds ... odours ... flavours ... tangibles ... things in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving arises, there it settles down.

Craving primarily wants there to be something to crave. Only at the “end” of the structure is there something concrete that can be taken up. Craving for craving for craving for something specific. Craving wants to give essence to being, provide for being, care for being.

This caring *for* being has a flip side, a downside, that is, the care, the concern, the worry *about* being: fear, anxiety. Fear is a threatened form of craving.

Deep down there lurks the anxiety that there might be no reason for fear, nothing of substance to be worried about. This is the terror of undefined being, which could also be described as a fear *for* defined being.



A bit more specific than this is the fear *for* the opportunity-for-fear: the fear *of* death. The fear *for* being, for existence, just like craving, needs something concrete, something positive "at the end". Something that fear can be afraid *of*. The fear *for* being is the mother (or condition) of every kind of concrete fear *of* something.

That's why reasons for fear *of* something are looked for and found, invented, imagined, taken up: so that fear *for* something finds its supposed *raison d'être*, its justification, its ground for being.

"Do we actually need a justification for being? And why do we crave to be there at all? We do exist, we are there already!"

We are not there, we do not exist the way a stone is a stone – a cluster of elements which changes but doesn't mind because it doesn't reflect on its existence. But I am I, only as an attempt to be what "I am". "I am" is eternal. And "I am" is a contradiction in terms,

because the object for “am” is missing. That’s why I crave such an object, something that I am, for example, the body. I crave my being as body the way the body is. But then I “is” the body, the object. Then I “am” no more (I). Another contradiction! And on top of that, the gravest contradiction: I cannot be the body after all, because the body is nowhere near as eternal as “I am”.

The thirst for being can never be quenched through what *is*. Craving is an endless and unfulfillable search. On the one hand I crave for what I am, and on the other I crave for what I am looking for, what I *could be*, potential being, *becoming* otherwise. Or to be more precise: I crave that there to be something that I could be looking for.

Craving for being constantly vacillates between these two poles – present actual being and absent potential being (which is present as the *possibility* of being). We can observe this nicely when we consider things that are essential to our existence, for example food.

Craving settles down with thoughts of forms, sounds, odours, flavours, tangibles and things, as we have learnt from the discourse. So, the next time we sit together with friends having a meal, let us watch how often our being vacillates between “eating-here&now” and “what we *could* eat” and how this manifests or settles down in oh so interesting and appealing thoughts.

It is a field of “potential drop” that exists between craving for being and craving for potential being (or being otherwise, becoming). Both are aspects of the more general craving for being or Dasein, existence, being-there. Which aspect receives more emphasis comes down to a third aspect of craving for being, one that turns towards whatever it is that promises more thrill, more suspense – whatever makes for a more intense being-there.

In tension

The third aspect of craving – *kāmatanḥā* – is mostly rendered as “craving for sense pleasure, for sense experience, or for sensuality”.

This always struck me as “asymmetrical”, like a fifth wheel, somehow apart from the pair of counterparts, *bhavataṇhā* and *vibhavataṇhā*.

We have already excluded “craving for sense *pleasure*”. Craving can also aim at things that are not pleasurable at all. Thoughtful people may from time to time have wondered: “Why do the discourses never mention craving for happiness, for the experience of well-being? *Sukhataṇhā* doesn’t seem to come up in the Buddha’s teaching.”

Furthermore we might wonder: “Sense experience is included in being. Why is it necessary to mention it separately? And sensuality is even more specific than sense experience, far too specific to be on the same level as something as fundamental as being.”

The word *kāma* literally means “wishing”. Wishing is always and in a quite general sense a comparison of what is and what could be, combined with the intention for a change of state. In the context of craving it is the wish for more. Craving for actual being is not enough to close the existential gap.

Craving for wishing “compares” the craving for actual being with the craving for potential being. It is directed towards the potential drop between the two of them. If craving for being consisted only of craving for what is there, standing out against the background of the possible, the structure would be static. Craving cannot persist like this, as has probably become clear from what has been said so far. It has to search, to seek out. Craving for wishing wants variety, fun, tension.

The word “tension” has different meanings in English:

1. something stimulating, suspense
2. conflict,
3. potential drop, voltage, dynamic difference.

All three are meant by and included in *wishing*. A few examples to illustrate this:

1. The *stimulation* is not found in the thing wished for, but in the wishing itself! With this realisation the phenomenon of *shopping* can be understood. Happiness is not in the bought item, nor in possess-

ing it, but in the intensity of expectation that hopefully there might be something that can be shopped for in that mind state of wishing, no matter what it is.

2. *Conflict* arises through wishing, whenever one's own wishes are at odds with the wishes of others, or when one's own wishes are in conflict with what is attainable or obtainable. Wishing in itself is a conflict with what *is*. The suspense in a gambling casino, when the last chips are at stake on the roulette table, is certainly stimulating. Does someone who has won a considerable amount stop gambling? No, because it is not about the winning, it is about the conflict, the friction – the nerve racking nature of it all.

3. The *drop* between the place wishing wants to go (the wished-for, the wish-worthy), and the place wishing wants to leave (the less wished-for, the less wish-worthy), is a kind of energy that exists on all levels of experience. It is the potential for movement, the opposite of calm and rest.

Let's call upon the example¹⁶⁴ of the round table once more. Even the most exquisite meal is still just that. A taste experience comes and goes. The mere possibility of some other mode of being is not very exciting yet, since the background is "automatically" included – for example, that there are other dishes on the menu. But as soon as the *wishing* attention is turned to one of these possibilities that might eventually become actuality, the experience in the gourmet restaurant becomes tantalising.

It doesn't matter whether a different dish might be more delicious. The *possibility of something different* is delicious. Craving for wishing masks the boredom – not of the food but of the craving. It makes craving intense, allows for a "feeling alive", because it also lends intensity to the being that is craved for.

Suspense and excitement always have something to do with a threat. Thrilling and potentially dangerous situations are certainly not blissful. Nevertheless we seek them out because we want the kick, the thrill. Thrill is a tamed version of fear, and thus an aspect of craving

itself. The taming part is our expectation that everything will turn out all right. Otherwise craving for wishing would not be a part of craving for being.

Even if it is only a suspense-packed movie that we are watching, we, as the spectators, are “threatened” because we identify with the hero or heroine, or because in our imagination we are involved in the story. A gripping movie derives its suspense from the multitude of possibilities of what could happen to the hero. That’s why a movie is no longer suspenseful on second viewing; the plurality of possibilities becomes a singleness – merely an imminent, barely absent, just around the corner certainty.

The role that *kāmatanḥā* plays in the triad of craving – why we are “doing” this (as a figure of speech) – is to make the craved for being appear as intense and crave-worthy as possible, to make it look like a state that could “last forever” (this, for example, is the illusion in the case of sex). But it is precisely this role that keeps up the momentum in the dynamics between being and potential being. Therefore there can never be anything that is crave-worthy forever – as the “Man from Munich in Heaven” found out.¹⁶⁵ Manna and gleeful exultation for all eternity? Pure hell!

On the other hand, in some distorted, even perverted way, we consider the restlessness, the kick, the excitement and tension to be some kind of happiness: the bliss of wishing, *kāmasukha*. We shall revisit this issue later in the context of the fourth noble truth.

Having clarified what is meant by “wishing” (*kāma*), we can now stick to the translation “craving for wishing”. But we will keep in mind that this wishing is in tension because the word *kāma* also features in other terms: wishing-drive (*kāmāsava*), wishing-will (*kāmacchanda*), strands of wishing (*kāmaguṇa*), taking-up of wishing (*kāmupādāna*). It is always about tension, never about well-being.

Deficient experience

Scholasticism and the meditation systems based on it are in agreement: “With a lot of mindfulness, the chain of dependent arising can be broken at a certain point, namely, between feeling and craving. The yogis can manage this if they are very mindful of every feeling and let go of all reactions to feeling.”

Some hope! But nothing will come of it, for two reasons:

1. Nobody can break the chain between feeling and craving, because there is no chain and thus no in-between. It is not a temporal sequence. There is no “reaction to feeling” happening here that could be prevented. The reaction to feeling that indeed does exist, “belongs” to the “temporal appendix” of dependent co-arising. The reaction to joy and sorrow, weal and woe, is part of the drama with which we stage ourselves in our coming-into-the-world.

2. If, however, we would prefer to understand “reaction” in a structural way as “the conditioned”, then we can say craving *is* the reaction to a deficient experience, an experience of lack. Even if we could remain equanimous in the face of the lack – as soon as we sense something as deficient, then we have already brought the lack into the world, then *we have already reacted*.

How did the Buddha expound this deficient experience in its conditional context? Let’s take a look at the remaining part of the twelve-factored example of dependent co-arising, that is, the origin of suffering: the stretch from consciousness “up to” feeling. In the case of ignorant, suffering beings, consciousness is conditioned by determinations.

Consciousness, or presence, is the condition for name&form (i.e., what is present), *to be present, to exist*. And name&form is the condition for consciousness (see chapter “Presence”). Without something being present there can’t be presence either – therefore consciousness and name&form are mutually dependent on each other. Taken together they are experience in general. Outside of this there is no experience (see chapter “Connections”).

And this experience is determination-conditioned. But we ignore-muses view it the other way round yet again: “Experience is the *background* for all, don’t you know, it stands behind everything!” We see it the other way round *because* it is determination-conditioned, conditioned by conditions that are not seen as such. They are seen as conditioned phenomena instead.

The same applies to “consciousness/name&form-conditioned is the sixfold domain”. Ordinary phenomenology says that the six senses condition experience – “After all, I am the one who sees, hears, smells, tastes, touches! I am the one who stands above all that is experienced.”^{mm} Against this Buddhho-phenomenology says that there can only be a branching off into six domains when there is experience in general. But note, consciousness that arises dependent on the domains, for example eye-consciousness, is more specific than “consciousness in general”.

This connection is “missing” in some formulas of dependent co-arising. But actually, nothing is really missing, since it is simply a slice of a structure that remains the same throughout. It does not matter if we say “ignorance-conditioned is suffering” or “determination-conditioned is suffering” or “craving-conditioned is suffering” and so on. These are all just different aspects that can be applied as tools in various ways to understand the overall context, depending on the inclination and disposition of the individual human being aiming at liberation.

Dependent on the eye and forms, eye-consciousness arises; the meeting of the three is contact; contact-conditioned is feeling; feeling-conditioned is craving. [And in the same way for the other five domains.]¹⁶⁶

M 148

^{mm}To be fair, it must be said that Heidegger and Sartre did notice that there was something rotten in the state of affairs. But they didn’t make much headway from there.

This discourse tells us that contact isn't simply the meeting of the eye with its object, as it is often "explained". Contact is rather the "engagement in experience", the "nudging". "Oops, there is something – and there is something wrong with this something!" This nudge or touch is qualified as pleasant, painful or neither-painful-nor-pleasant. Feeling is this qualification of experience, the tail end of the general structure of experience.

Friend Visākha, the *urge* to passion *underlies** pleasant feeling. The urge to resistance underlies painful feeling. The urge to ignorance underlies neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling.¹⁶⁷

M 44

Craving "reacts" accordingly. If it is pleasant, craving for actual being is normally dominant. If it is unpleasant, craving for potential being, for becoming otherwise, predominates. If it is neutral, craving for wishing comes to the fore. Of course, this is a simplified description, since we can also delight in unpleasant things, as mentioned before.

What does craving react to? Experience in its general form and in any specific occurrence is determination-conditioned. So, as mentioned above, this means that everything is always the other way round! What in reality is conditioned, temporal, is seen as a non-temporal condition, as an eternal background – as "self". But nothing in experience, be it general or specific, provides an answer to "but who?".

It is precisely this that is the deficiency in experience, the gap. This is what is wrong when the nudging takes place. The lack clearly manifests in feeling. It is the feeling of the existential gap: there is no self to be found in experience. It has to be craved for.

This also explains the always tempting tendency to bring temporality into any attempt to understand paṭiccasamuppāda, and at the same time to remove the "(at)tempter" from temporality. At the beginner's stage this means: "First I am there, and only then do I go looking for something to experience." Whereas "advanced" students phrase it so:

“First comes contact, then feeling, then we react to that ... well no, then craving reacts to that and then something is taken-up.”

But there is no “first” and “then”, no succession. It is a *structure* of the origin of suffering. And this cannot be cracked at any point with any trick or dodge, however brilliant.

Without beginning

The whole malaise of deficient experience, the futile attempt to fix the lack through identification, and the coming-into-the-world of suffering, is the special conditionality. It has a condition too: not seeing that it is so, ignorance. Is ignorance now the first condition and absolute background of being?

With the origin of the drives is the origin of ignorance, with the cessation of the drives is the cessation of ignorance ... There are, friends, these three drives: wishing-drive, being-drive, ignorance-drive. With the origin of ignorance is the origin of the drives, with the cessation of ignorance is the cessation of the drives.¹⁶⁸

M9

Ignorance is conditioned by the drives, and the drives are conditioned by ignorance. Ignorance is not-knowing in regard to the four noble truths. The second truth is a structure dependent on ignorance. So this means that ignorance is not-knowing ignorance. No wonder that the origin of suffering is so stable, no wonder that it is so difficult to escape from suffering.

A first beginning of ignorance is not evident, such as: “Before this there was no ignorance, then later it came to be.” But even if it is said so, it is evident: “Special-conditioned is ignorance.” And I also say that ignorance is with nutriment, not without nutriment.¹⁶⁹

A 10.61

What happens when ignorance is deprived of its nutriment?

The Discourse –

Analysis of the truth of cessation

And what, bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the cessation of suffering? It is the *remainderless cessation-through-dispassion**, the giving up, letting go of this very craving, liberation from and non-attachment to it.

And this craving, where is it abandoned, where does it cease? Whatever in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving is abandoned, there it ceases.

What in the world is interesting and appealing? The eye in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving is abandoned, there it ceases. The ear ... The nose ... The tongue ... The body ... The mind in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving is abandoned, there it ceases.

Forms ... Sounds ... Odours ... Flavours ... Tangibles ... Things.../ Eye-consciousness ... Ear-consciousness ... Nose-consciousness ... Tongue-consciousness ... Body-consciousness ... Mind-consciousness .../ Eye-contact ... Ear-contact ... Nose-contact ... Tongue-contact ... Body-contact ... Mind-contact .../ Feeling produced by eye-contact ... ear-contact ... nose-contact ... tongue-contact ... body-contact ... mind-contact .../ Perception of forms ... Perception of sounds ... Perception of odours ... Perception of flavours ... Perception of tangibles ... Perception of things .../ Intention of forms ... Intention of sounds ... Intention of odours ... Intention of flavours ... Intention of tangibles ... Intention of things .../

Craving for forms ... sounds ... odours ... flavours ... tangibles ... things in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving is abandoned, there it ceases.

Thought/Sustained thought of forms ... sounds ... odours ... flavours ... tangibles ... things in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving is abandoned, there it ceases.

This is called the noble truth of the cessation of suffering.

11. Detox

For the special conditionality to cease, the same principles apply as do for the noble truth of the origin of suffering, dependent co-arising: if everything arises together, then the whole structure will break down as soon as one condition ceases. In other words: cessation follows the same pattern as arising, namely, “together”.

But, Udāyi, let the before be, let the thereafter be, I shall teach you the Dhamma: When there is this, this is. With the arising of this, this arises. When there is not this, this is not. With the cessation of this, this ceases.¹⁷⁰

M 79

It doesn't matter whether we say, “suffering ceases when craving ceases,” or, “suffering ceases when ignorance ceases,” or, “suffering ceases when the drives, the condition for ignorance, are destroyed.”

And what, bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the cessation of suffering? With the remainderless cessation-through-dispassion of this very ignorance is the cessation of determinations; with the cessation of determinations is the cessation of consciousness; with the cessation of consciousness is the cessation of name&form; with the cessation of name&form is the cessation of the sixfold domain; with the cessation of the sixfold domain is the cessation of contact; with the cessation of contact is the cessation of feeling; with the cessation of feeling is the cessation of craving; with the cessation of craving is the cessation of taking-up; with the cessation of taking-up is the cessation of being; with the cessation of being is the cessation of coming-into-the-world; with the cessation of coming-into-the-world, ageing&dying, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair cease. Such is the cessation of this whole heap of suffering. This is called the noble truth of the cessation of suffering.¹⁷¹

A 3. 62 (PTS No. 61)

We gather from the passage in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta that craving is abandoned exactly where it arises – practically everywhere. This rules out the possibility that liberation is attained somewhere apart from normal experience, say, in some mystical hereafter or some transcendental other-land. Normal experience, the five heaps, is the material we set to work with:

What do you conceive, bhikkhus? Is form, feeling, perception, determinations, consciousness permanent or impermanent?

– Impermanent, venerable sir.

– And is that which is impermanent unpleasant or pleasant?

– Unpleasant, venerable sir.

– And is that which is impermanent, unpleasant, a thing of change suitable to be regarded thus: “This is mine, this one I am, this one is my self”?

– Certainly not, venerable sir.

– Therefore, bhikkhus, any kind of form, of feeling, of perception, of determinations, of consciousness whatever, whether past, future, or present, internal or external, coarse or subtle, low or sublime, far or near, all form, feeling, perception, determinations, consciousness [is to be seen]: “This is not mine, this one I am not, this one is not my self.” In this way it is to be seen according to reality with right wisdom.

Seeing in this way a well-instructed noble-disciple becomes *disenchanted** in regard to form, disenchanted in regard to feeling, disenchanted in regard to perception, disenchanted in regard to determinations, disenchanted in regard to consciousness. Being disenchanted he becomes dispassionate. Through dispassion he is liberated. In the liberated one there is the knowledge: “Liberated!” He understands: “Coming-into-the-world

has been destroyed, the holy life has been fully lived, the task has been done. There is nothing else beyond this state.”¹⁷²

S 22.59 (condensed)

In other discourses, normal experience in terms of the six domains or the six properties serves as the material for attaining the vision of right wisdom in exactly the same manner: “This is not mine, this one I am not, this one is not my self.”

It begins with the insight which comprehends that all five heaps, all six domains, all six properties are impermanent, and thus do not qualify as possessions, and that they therefore do not point to an owner, a possessor. This results in the following sequence: right wisdom-vision – disenchantment – dispassion – liberation. And we may well encounter other descriptions of this sequence in the suttas:

Having turned the heart away from those things he directs it towards the deathless property: “This is the peaceful, this is the sublime, namely, the calming of all determinations, the letting go of all acquisition, the destruction of craving, dispassion, cessation, Nibbāna.” Standing there he arrives at the destruction of the drives.¹⁷³

M 64

Dispassion is the *culminating point* of the practice that still takes place within the structure of “determination-conditioned”. After this, the special conditionality falls apart: cessation is the *turning point* towards the undetermined, Nibbāna.

So, “cessation” can refer to cessation of existence or to cessation of function. This means that some things disappear, such as the drives, ignorance and craving; others do not disappear, but cease to function as determinations.

The vision of wisdom

Once again: the sobering, disenchanting realisation that the heaps are not suitable for identification begins by seeing their impermanence.

Bhikkhus, form is impermanent, feeling is impermanent, perception is impermanent, determinations are impermanent, consciousness is impermanent.

Bhikkhus, form is not-self, feeling is not-self, perception is not-self, determinations are not-self, consciousness is not-self:

All determinations are impermanent, all things are not-self.¹⁷⁴

M 35

Why is it not, “all things are impermanent”? It’s because this is obvious, we do not need a Buddha to confirm it. But determinations, the condition for things, are in comparison to the impermanent things, “eternal”. And since we see things, not conditions, this is not just a simple hint, it’s a powerful kōan for our practice, a mantra, a dictum, expressing the essence of the Buddha’s teaching:

All determinations are impermanent, all things are not-self.

We can see things empirically – that which lies before our eyes. We can easily see that all observed things are impermanent. The *conditions* of these things, however, can only be seen *as* impermanent if we can in turn see *their* conditions, understanding that those conditions are conditioned too.

Whenever we can see a condition as impermanent, we know automatically that the thing conditioned by it must be impermanent too, even if it is something that we cannot see empirically. Does such a something exist? What thing then can we not see? Those who have forgotten can look this up on pages 162 and 223 as to what it is like when the observer tries to observe him- or herself. We can ascertain this phenomenologically for ourselves:

The observer always shifts to the next higher, “eternal” level. That’s why the observer believes him- or herself to be permanent, independent of determinations, to be self. The Buddha tells us, however, that this belief too *is* determined. What is its determination?

And how, bhikkhus, should one know, how should one see, that there is the immediate destruction of the drives for him? Here, bhikkhus, an uninstructed ordinary person, who does not pay attention to noble ones and is not well-versed, not trained in the noble Dhamma, who does not pay attention to upright men and is not well-versed, not trained in the Dhamma of upright men, regards form, feeling, perception, determinations, consciousness as self. That regarding, bhikkhus, is a determination. That determination – what is its source, what is its origin, what is its production, what is its coming-forth? For the uninstructed ordinary person, contacted by a feeling produced by ignorance-contact, craving arises: thence that determination is produced. In this way indeed, that determination is impermanent, determined, dependently co-arisen. That craving too is impermanent, determined, dependently co-arisen. That feeling too is impermanent, determined, dependently co-arisen. That contact too is impermanent, determined, dependently co-arisen. That ignorance too is impermanent, determined, dependently co-arisen. For one who knows thus, who sees thus, there is the immediate destruction of the drives.¹⁷⁵

S 22.81

“The five heaps are my self.” It is precisely this way of regarding, that is an expression of the taking-up of a belief in a self-image. As we have already learnt: “Taking-up-conditioned is being.” And I had asserted that “determination-conditioned” applies to all “parts” of the special conditionality. Here the Buddha provides confirmation: “Taking-up-conditioned” is the same as “determination-conditioned”.

And the parts that I have called “deficient experience” are determinations each and all.

The discourse lists further ways of regarding, further determinations, further confessions of faith: “My self possesses the five khandhas (or one or the other of them), my self is included in the five khandhas, the five khandhas are included in my self.”

So, this belief in a self is a determination, and as such it is itself impermanent, determined, dependently co-arisen. But it is not so easy to see this (a gross understatement!). The natural law is extra-temporal compared to the thing that is subject to this principle. Eternal! This is difficult enough. But that something we take to be eternal already – namely, our self – should be dependent on conditions ... “Well, they must be even more eternal again!”

The discourse deals with the end of the practice, with the immediate destruction of the drives. Someone who knows thus, who sees thus, has completed the task of the second noble truth: craving has been abandoned. This is identical to the application-bases of mindfulness being completely penetratingly known – see the “The End of Satipaṭṭhāna” chapter.

Hard work

Let’s rather deal with the beginning of the practice. What is the *path* we have to follow if we want to finally arrive at the destruction of the drives? What is it that we have to do? And here again we meet our power mantra:

All determinations are impermanent ...
 All determinations are unpleasant ...
 All things are not-self –
 when one sees this with wisdom,
 one turns away from suffering.
 This is the *path* to purity.¹⁷⁶

All determinations are *impermanent*. Seeing this is the cause for disenchantment. It is the right vision of wisdom, the trigger for the sequence towards liberation that starts with disenchantment, with a sober view, with a turning away. Thus it has been said. So there must be something profound behind it. Something difficult, otherwise we all would be liberated already.

To see *impermanence* doesn't really cause us any problems: arising, change of the standing, passing-away, and the certainty that something will change, combined with the uncertainty about the How and When of its change. As was discussed at length in the "When is Now?" chapter.^{177 nn}

Determinations are impermanent. We can see the impermanence of any particular *thing* in relation to its background. And we can see any particular determination *as* an impermanent thing. To do so we need a higher level, its condition. That too is feasible, since we have learnt already that determinations are determined too, *as determinations*. But to *see* this is more difficult.

All determinations are impermanent. "All determinations", that is, the five khandhas, as we gathered from the opening quote of the preceding chapter. And "all things", that is, things that are determined by "all determinations", and therefore not-self – that again is the five khandhas. We have to see the impermanence of the five khandhas against the background of the five khandhas.

That makes it basically impossible to disclose the natural law of "all determinations" in a phenomenological way. The only contribution phenomenology can make here, is to notice that there is something wrong with Dasein, with being. And from there on, we must be of the opinion that it would be good to see all determinations the way the Buddha told us. The following discourse lists a few possibilities as to how we can motivate ourselves in regard to the correct perception of impermanence:

nn I do not deem my readers to be slow-witted or forgetful; therefore, from now on I will relegate all further remarks on scholastic "explanations" to the appendix.

Bhikkhus, it is enough for establishing the perception of impermanence, when a bhikkhu considers six benefits, having brought about generalisation in regard to all determinations.

What six? “All determinations will appear to me as unsteady, and my mind will not find amusement in the entire world, and my mind will rise up from the entire world, and my intent will be inclined towards Nibbāna, and my fetters will approach abandonment, and I will be endowed with superior samaṇa-hood.”¹⁷⁸

A 6. 102

Mind you, our bhikkhu here has not yet attained these six benefits. He *will* reach this point once he *has* established perception of impermanence. To do so, he first has to bring about generalisation in regard to all determinations. But how?

In order to understand any natural law or principle, we need at least one example for it which we can examine. Or better two.

Let us take the two examples of determinations that we met pretty much right at the beginning of this book: the breath as a determination of the body and rapture (pīti) as a determination of the heart.

The breath comes and goes. This is change of the standing. One day it will not come any more. The higher, more general level, on which both are included, and on which we can compare the before and after, would be, for example, the wind property in general. Or the meat loaf (sarīra), which can be breathing or not breathing, that is, alive or dead. With this, we have covered the impermanence of the breath fully and correctly.

The breath is a condition for the body as currently being experienced. This is the one aspect of determinations, they condition something, and this we can comprehend: “It breathes *me*.”¹⁷⁹ The other aspect of determinations (which I have actually just given away) is their nature as would-be possessions. More precisely: “The breath is *for me*. It is my breath.”

But since in reality the breath is a determination, that is, a *condition* both for the “possessor” *and* for the body, the way it is usually seen is wrong: “The breath is for the body that is me. I am the body, which is proven by the fact that I, the body, am breathing.”

As soon as this is (more or less) penetratingly known, the determination loses in power and increasingly becomes a mere thing, or a mere condition for the body, depending on how it is looked at: “It breathes.” The identification with the breathed-up body wanes: “Breath is impermanent, therefore the body is not my self.”

Pīti is impermanent. Alas! Pīti is very pleasant. Letting go of something that pleasant is particularly difficult.

An overwhelming feeling of pīti arose that felt as if I could push through the mountain with a snap of my fingers, but I didn’t succumb to the idea of trying because I had a balanced level of mindfulness and wisdom that was taking note: This is pīti, just pīti. I didn’t lose control easily. I was aware that I had pīti under control because regardless of whether it was happiness, equanimity or pīti, they are all subject to the power of aniccaṃ. They arise, then change and pass away.¹⁸⁰

Khemapatto Bhikkhu (Luang Pū Lā)

The background against which rapture comes and goes is feeling in general, as an application-base of mindfulness: sometimes it is pleasant, sometimes not. When rapture is present, it changes, for example, in intensity or nature. That it will pass away is certain. Alas again! Maybe it will last a little longer, maybe not. This is the uncertainty of change. With this, the understanding of impermanence when it comes to pīti has been checked off.

Rapture is the condition for the present state of the heart. And it is its would-be possession – “My rapture, the rapture that belongs to me, that is, to my heart!” – which in reality conditions the possessor. Once this is known, it becomes: “This is pīti, just pīti. Pīti is impermanent, therefore the heart is not my self.”

This way of regarding things is more difficult than in the case of the breath because identification with the heart is stronger than identification with the body. It is more difficult to contemplate heart externally. (Who can recall what happened 200 pages back?)

How much more difficult is it now to disclose the natural law or the principle behind, or above, these observations: “*All determinations are impermanent.*” The emphasis is on “determinations”, not on “impermanent”. First and foremost it is all about seeing that all this impermanent stuff is determinations.

What then, is the background of all, that is, of the five khandhas, against which we can see their impermanence? It is the five khandhas. And what are the things that are determined by the five khandhas? Again, the five khandhas. “Determinations” is as wide as our whole experience. It becomes quite obvious that it would be a hopeless endeavour to try to examine every single determination, or even every single type of determination, in the way described above in order to arrive at an understanding of the kōan in an empirical or statistical way. Our understanding has to be structural: If determination, then impermanent. If impermanent, then determination.

In his essay “Change”, Sāmaṇera Bodhesako provides a nice simile showing just what structural understanding means. And because this essay is written with a good dose of humour, I wouldn’t wish to withhold a few excerpts of it from my readers.

Understanding the circle

You and I would have no difficulty in accepting the statement “all circles are round.” It is obvious. Indeed, it is virtually a pleonasm. True, we have not inspected every circle that exists and tested each for roundness. True, we may have personally come across but a minute fraction of all circles that presently exist (let alone those that have been or will come to be). And yet this introduces no jot of doubt into our conviction that all

circles are in fact round. Our certainty is structural, not statistical.[...]

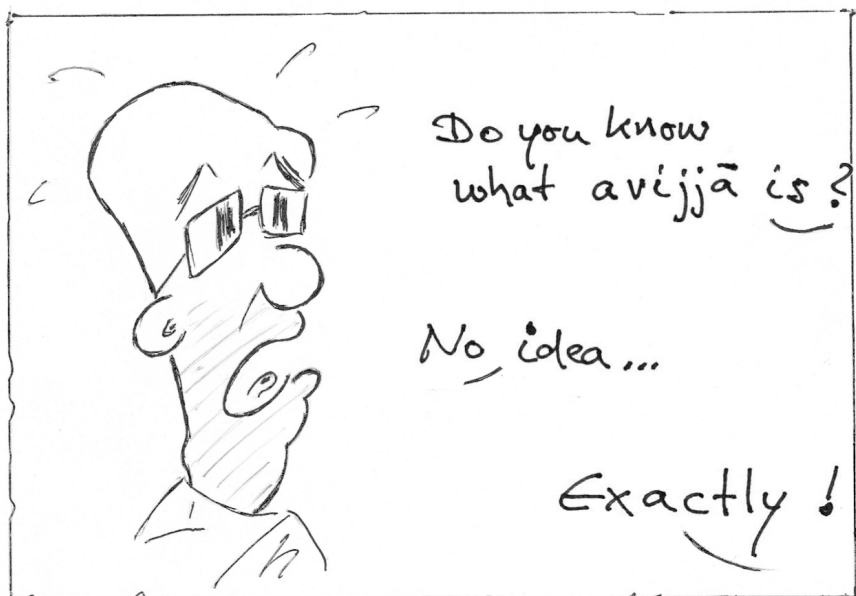
But suppose (unlikely though it may be) that we should meet someone who though otherwise both sane and intelligent does not happen to see the structural necessity for the roundness of circles. He, presented with the proposition that all circles are round, might nevertheless agree with it. After all, in his entire life he has never once seen a single circle that was not round as round could be. Yet his assent would be of a different nature than ours. For him doubt would still be possible. Perhaps in the frozen methane wastes of Io, or in the intense gravity of the sun's crucible, there might exist a circle that was, say, oblong. He could not be sure, for he has failed to recognize the principle that roundness is the condition for circles. When there is roundness there are circles; with arising of roundness circles arise. When there is not roundness there are not circles; with ceasing of roundness circles cease.

Our friend, who is congenial and acquiescent, wishes to be (as are we) beyond doubt in this matter. He would like to understand how it is that the roundness of circles is a matter of necessity rather than a mere matter of fact (for he has heard, as may well be the case, that higher than actuality stands possibility). But how is he to accomplish this? For although it is clear to him that a mere statistical survey of circles will never achieve this certainty (since no such survey could ever hope to be exhaustive), yet any explanation he may devise (or purchase from zealous hawkers of various persuasions) could never be more adequate than the dubious perception upon which it is based. He may endorse some creation theory or other regarding an original proto-Roundness out of which all circles emanate. He may espouse an eschatological view about an eventual return

of all circles to the One Great Circle (so Round that the roundness of known circles is but a shadow of Its roundness). Or he may entangle himself in pseudo-phenomenological theories that circles are nothing more than a vast number of minute particles of roundness, these particles being perceivable (and only with vast effort) to but the few. In this thicket of views all talk of such phenomena as curvature would be regarded as merely conventional speech: ultimate terms could refer only to these minute particulae of roundness, and it would be towards their perception that he would direct his efforts. [...]

What he needs to see is really quite simple. Indeed, a good part of his problem is that he has made things much too complicated, and has thereby masked the truth. It would be of little use, then, to point to the great variety of existing circles. Certainly, circles can be red or blue, large or small, thick or thin. Some are made of stainless steel, others of sealing wax. Some contain artificial preservatives, others are vicious. A few are very valuable. Many are made in Hong Kong. But all of this variety is actually superficial. What needs to be seen is not their diversity but that which is common to every circle. And for this it is sufficient for our friend to sit down with one single circle of any convenient colour, size, and composition, and to try to see what is essential to it. What is there dependent upon which the circle is in fact a circle? If he comes to recognize the essence of any one circle he will understand the essence of all circles. And if our friend can avoid being misled by the-ories, if he can eliminate the extraneous, if he can attend to what is essential, he may succeed in doing just this, and thereby pass beyond all doubt, as are we, as to the fact that “All circles are round.”¹⁸¹

Sāmaṇera Bodhesako



The inability to see “all circles are round” is a matter of not knowing a certain aspect of life, a distinct lack of information. Someone who doesn’t understand the roundness of circles in a structural sense still knows that it is so. Such a lack would be relatively easy to fix.

The inability to see “all determinations are impermanent”, however, is conditioned by ignorance. It is an active conditioning, that does not just affect one segment, but all of experience. This ignorance sustains itself because it contains itself. Ignorance is a structural blindness on all levels, and that means ignorance cannot see itself. It conditions the ignorance-drive and the ignorance-drive conditions ignorance. This is a circling without beginning.

Faith and certainty

To get out of the circle we have to rely on the Buddha, something mentioned already, even if this very point is contested by some schools of meditation that invoke the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta. But with mindfulness alone there's no exit from the hamster wheel! We reach a certain point that we cannot get beyond. But if this is exactly what we want, we have to rely on the Buddha. There is no other option!

We place our faith in the Buddha in advance, we *assume* that he is right and that impermanence applies everywhere. With this, it becomes possible to accept his teaching, even if it still goes against the grain of our worldly phenomenology:

But, bhikkhus, that a bhikkhu who regards all determinations as impermanent will be endowed with acceptance in accordance (with the Dhamma) – this is possible.¹⁸²

A6.98

Acceptance in accordance means that we assume that all determinations are impermanent *because* the Buddha has taught it so:

Bhikkhus, when one endowed with six things hears the good Dhamma, one is capable to enter the certainty of correctness in regard to wholesome things. With what six? When the Dhamma&discipline proclaimed by the Tathāgata is being taught, one is intent on listening. One listens closely. One engages a heart of understanding. One takes the meaning. One discards what is not the meaning. One is endowed with acceptance in accordance (with the Dhamma). Bhikkhus, when one endowed with these six things hears the good Dhamma, one is capable to enter the certainty of correctness in regard to wholesome things.¹⁸³

A6.88

Acceptance in accordance is not a “Buddhist creed” or confession of faith. Recognising that the teaching goes *against the grain* is part of it. We need trust, confidence, sincerity and uprightness. If we take the four noble truths as truisms, we have to stop and reconsider because then there is something that we have not really understood. Or something hasn’t been explained to us correctly. If the Dhamma appears too easy, too “logical”, or if we think that we could have figured it out by ourselves, then we are definitely on the wrong track. If our ideas of the teaching amount to something for which no Buddha would have been necessary, we are miles away from acceptance in accordance.

“One endowed with acceptance in accordance (with the Dhamma) will enter the certainty of correctness” – this is possible. “One entering the certainty of correctness will realise the fruit of stream-entry or the fruit of a once-returner or the fruit of a non-returner or arahantship” – this is possible.¹⁸⁴

A6.98

The *certainty of correctness* that *all* determinations (which includes regarding the five khandhas as self) are impermanent, leaves no room for any permanent thing: “Admittedly, I cannot see my self as impermanent, but I am certain that it must be dependent on impermanent determinations. It just can’t be otherwise!”

Certainty of correctness means *to be sure*, to be certain that it has to be like that. And this is the precondition for the next step on the way to going beyond doubt at stream entry, on the way to personal knowing&seeing: “Yes, it is like that. What still appears to be my self, is in reality dependently arisen. It is dependent on impermanent determinations, therefore it is not as independent and eternal as a self should be. Now I can see where the error is and I can work on it.”

Three revolutions

Certainty of correctness crossfades into the vision of wisdom: into knowing&seeing according to reality. Seeing the four noble truths bears fruit in the abandonment of three things that keep us fettered to ignorance-conditioned being:

He attends wisely penetrating to the source: “This is suffering”; he attends wisely penetrating to the source: “This is the origin of suffering”; he attends wisely penetrating to the source: “This is the cessation of suffering”; he attends wisely penetrating to the source: “This is the practice leading to the cessation of suffering.” For one who attends wisely penetrating to the source in this way, three fetters are abandoned: personality view, doubt, and *adherence to habits&tasks**. These are called the drives that are to be abandoned by seeing.¹⁸⁵

M2

This is the fruit of stream entry mentioned above. The four noble truths have been likened to a wheel. They are the wheel of the Dhamma. With the seeing of the four noble truths at stream entry the first turning – or actually the first revolution – of the wheel has taken place. Therewith the noble eightfold path, the path of higher training, has been opened up.

There is no “but who?” any more because personality view has been abandoned, together with its two accomplices. The conceit “I am”, however, has not yet been cut off. The drives, conditions for ignorance, are not yet completely destroyed. Though they will now be gradually weakened and undermined.

The stream enterer in higher training now has to take on tasks in connection with the four noble truths:

The noble truth of suffering *is to be completely penetratingly known*; the noble truth of the origin of suffering *is to be abandoned*; the noble truth of the cessation of

suffering *is to be realised*; the noble truth of the practice leading to the cessation of suffering *is to be developed*.

S 56.29 (already quoted in the chapter “Suffering suffering”)

This is the second revolution, the second turning of the wheel of the teaching. Once suffering has been completely penetratingly known, craving is abandoned, cessation of suffering is realised, and the noble eightfold path has been fully developed; the third revolution has taken place, and all drives have been destroyed. The conceit “I am” is no more, neither is there any ignorance left. All urges are gone. All craving is gone, all acquisition, all taking-up, all coming-into-the-world. All suffering has come to an end.

This is a temporal process. Ignorance is without beginning, but it can be brought to an end. It takes three revolutions. It takes time.¹⁸⁶

First of all, for the first revolution to take place, certainty of correctness has to be confirmed by vision, in order for it to be transformed into knowing&seeing according to reality, into *transforming* knowing&seeing.

How that is accomplished we will see in the next chapter.

The Discourse –

Analysis of the truth of the path

And what, bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the practice leading to the cessation of suffering? It is just this noble eightfold path; that is, *right view**, *right resolve**, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.

And what, bhikkhus, is right view? Knowledge in regard to suffering, knowledge in regard to the origin of suffering, knowledge in regard to the cessation of suffering, and knowledge in regard to the practice leading to the cessation of suffering – this is called right view.

And what, bhikkhus, is right resolve? Resolve for renunciation, resolve for non-ill will, and resolve for harmlessness – this is called right resolve.

And what, bhikkhus, is right speech? ... And what, bhikkhus, is right action? ... And what, bhikkhus, is right livelihood? ...

And what, bhikkhus, is right effort? ...

And what, bhikkhus, is right mindfulness? Here a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating ... He abides with feelings feeling-contemplating ... He abides with the heart heart-contemplating ... He abides with things thing-contemplating, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having removed greed&grief in regard to the world. This is called right mindfulness.

And what, bhikkhus, is right concentration? ...

This is called the noble truth of the practice leading to the cessation of suffering.

In this way he abides internally with things thing-contemplating ... And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with things thing-contemplating in terms of the four noble truths.

12. How Does it Work?

So now we have spent hours and hours trying to see determinations, but we still haven't realised the cessation of suffering. Not even any certainty of correctness, let alone stream entry.

Attaining right view seems to be quite complicated. But right view has nothing to do with an edifice of ideas, it is nothing that can be thought out or gained through pondering. So, it isn't really that complicated. It's just that my description and presentation might appear a little complicated. Right view is a *way of seeing*. Our present way of seeing is contorted. In reality, "everything" is precisely the other way round! It won't help to consult explanations based on this very way of seeing either. We would be better off to listen closely when the Dhamma&discipline proclaimed by the Tathāgata is being taught: "This is not mine, this one I am not, this one is not my self."

It is not sufficient, as we may have noticed, to simply recite this sentence a hundred or a thousand times. And it is not yet sufficient to turn the content of this sentence into a habit of thought. Nevertheless, such a habit is an indispensable ingredient in our practice on the way to certainty of correctness, as a precondition for right view.

A very famous Thai master, Venerable Subhaddo (Luang Phō Chā) emphasised again and again that everything one encounters in life should be viewed as insecure and impermanent. The contemplation he encouraged sounds almost like a meditation word or mantra: "No matter what, it is impermanent, not sure."¹⁸⁷

Several discourses provide the context for this contemplation, and make the link to the following insight: "Whatever is impermanent, that is not suitable for identification. This is called knowing&seeing (or knowledge&vision) according to reality." The habit of thought supports the knowing aspect, the knowing according to reality.

One part of this habit is also the second path factor: right resolve or *way of thinking* or intention or attribution. This factor is the partner to right view, to the right *way of seeing*. It also gives direction to the knowing: renunciation as an antidote to wishing and greed, non-ill will as an antidote to ill-will and hatred, harmlessness as an antidote

to ruthlessness, carelessness and delusion. In short, right resolve aims to reduce and end suffering, for oneself and others.

Those two factors, right view (knowing&seeing the path) and right resolve (wanting to follow the path), together are referred to as the wisdom part of the noble eightfold path. In Part 1 of this book it was stated that real development of satipaṭṭhāna cannot take place before higher training. The same applies to the entire noble path and its factors. But this does not mean that we cannot or should not practise these qualities before we reach the path. On the contrary, it is necessary that we draw as close to the real path factors as we can, so that the “flipping over” of view, of the way of seeing, can take place. Stream entry “from a standing start” is not possible.

The Mahāsaḷāyatana Sutta (M149) tells us that if one knows *and sees* the six inner and outer domains according to reality together with the corresponding contact and feeling, whether pleasant, painful or neither-painful-nor-pleasant, then one is *uninflamed by passion* in regard to these things – that is, in regard to all. The discourse then establishes the context and connection between knowing&seeing according to reality and the noble eightfold path, along with other good things:

For one who abides uninflamed by passion, unfettered, uninfatuated, contemplating danger, the five taking-up-heaps go towards future de-cumulation; and one’s craving that brings further being, that is accompanied by delectation&passion and delights here and there, is abandoned for oneself. One’s bodily and mental troubles are abandoned, one’s bodily and mental torments are abandoned, one’s bodily and mental fevers are abandoned, and one experiences bodily and mental ease.

The view of one thus-become is right view. His resolve is right resolve, his effort is right effort, his mindfulness is right mindfulness, his concentration is right concentration. But his bodily action, his verbal action, and his

livelihood have already been well purified before. Thus this noble eightfold path comes to fulfilment by development for him.

For one who develops this noble eightfold path, the four application-bases of mindfulness also come to fulfilment by development; the four right exertions also come to fulfilment by development for him; the four bases of success also come to fulfilment by development for him; the *five (spiritual) faculties** also come to fulfilment by development for him; the five powers also come to fulfilment by development for him; the seven awakening factors also come to fulfilment by development for him.

These two things – calm and insight – occur for him evenly paired. He completely penetratingly knows with higher knowledge the things that are to be completely penetratingly known with higher knowledge. He abandons with higher knowledge the things that are to be abandoned with higher knowledge. He realises with higher knowledge the things that are to be realised with higher knowledge. He develops with higher knowledge the things that are to be developed with higher knowledge.

The last paragraph lists the four tasks of one in higher training. The “things” mentioned in this context represent the four noble truths:

And what things are to be completely penetratingly known with higher knowledge? “The five taking-up-heaps,” should be answered, namely, the form taking-up-heap, the feeling taking-up-heap, the perception taking-up-heap, the determinations taking-up-heap, the consciousness taking-up-heap. These things are to be completely penetratingly known with higher knowledge.

And what things are to be abandoned with higher knowledge? Ignorance and craving for being. These things are to be abandoned with higher knowledge.

And what things are to be developed with higher knowledge? Calm and insight. These things are to be developed with higher knowledge.

And what things are to be realised with higher knowledge? True knowing and liberation. These things are to be realised with higher knowledge.¹⁸⁸

M 149

The truth of cessation and the truth of the path of practice have swapped places here. Some categories of the teaching have been mentioned here that we haven't dealt with yet. This doesn't matter, in principle they are the same as the eightfold path as a whole (remember: hologram, not pigeonholes!).

In the last few chapters we have discussed the wisdom part of the eightfold path in some detail. So what is still missing then? It is how the *knowing* of the four noble truths according to reality can be joined with the *seeing* of them. But before we get there we need to touch once more on the topic of ethics.

Ethics

In the previous quote regarding ethics (or virtuous, wholesome behaviour) the following was said: "His bodily action, his verbal action, and his livelihood have already been well purified before." Does this mean that a stream enterer has nothing left to do in the realm of ethics?

The Mahācattārisaka Sutta (M117) compares the practice *on* the path to the "preliminary" practice *before* the path has been attained. In regard to the path factors right speech, right action and right livelihood, we cannot ascertain any external difference between the virtuous behaviour of an ordinary person and a person who is on the noble path. Both don't kill, steal, speak lies and so on. Their speech,

bodily action and general situation in life are in accordance with their right resolve. Both want to reduce suffering. Both want to escape from suffering. The difference according to the discourse is that these three ethical aspects are a path factor for someone on the path.

One in higher training who is endowed with right view, the right way of seeing, doesn't use ethical behaviour in order to construct a self-image out of it: "I am someone who is virtuous." Another difference is this:

Just as a young, inexperienced infant lying on his back, having touched hot charcoal with his his hand or his foot, immediately draws back, in the same way, this is the state of things of a person endowed with (right) view: whatever offence he may commit for which a means of rehabilitation is discerned, he immediately confesses it, reveals it, admits it to the Teacher or to wise companions in the holy life. Having confessed, revealed and admitted he undertakes restraint for the future.¹⁸⁹

M48

This simile illustrates nicely that such people don't have to ponder in order to act in a virtuous, ethical way, because they can see that non-virtuous behaviour would do damage to their progress on the path. It would do them harm.

Bhikkhus, there are these two powers. What two? The power of consideration and the power of development. And what is the power of consideration? Here, someone considers thus: "For one with bodily, verbal and mental misconduct, there is evil ripening here&now and in what comes on the other side." Having considered thus, having abandoned bodily, verbal and mental misconduct, he develops good bodily, verbal and mental conduct. He keeps himself pure. This is called the power of consideration.

And what is the power of development? The power of development is the power of those in higher training. By means of the training power he abandons *passion, hatred and delusion**. Having abandoned passion, hatred and delusion he does not do what is unwholesome, he does not partake in what is evil. This is called the power of development.¹⁹⁰

A2. 11

Subsequently the discourse points out *what* those in higher training are developing here, namely, the seven awakening factors. And *how* do they develop them? By practising deep meditation, the jhānas.

Juxtaposed with this is the power of consideration of ordinary people, who have to constantly coax themselves in order to improve their situation, in order to act in wholesome ways, to progress. Compared to the stream enterer they are groping in the dark when it comes to the abandoning of passion, hatred and delusion. They move *towards* the attainment of ethics or of virtue, i.e they *try* to lift their ethical standard – something that they have accepted out of confidence or insight – up to the level of a disclosed, experienced truth.

The noble ones do not have to consider anything. Their view has already modified their way of experience; it is of such a nature that unwholesome action immediately “hurts”. They move *on* the field of ethics, that means, they are endowed with a standard that has been experienced as true and valid. And they move towards going beyond ethics, towards non-identification with any virtuous behaviour, with what is wholesome (compare M78).

Calm and insight

So far we have dealt with the wisdom part (paññā) and the ethics part (sīla) of the eightfold path. The last three path factors constitute the concentration part (samādhi): right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. Concentration is the culminating point of the eightfold path and at the same time the umbrella term for these three factors. It gives a name to the topic of “development of the heart”.

Right effort is described (on page 337) as the four right exertions or kinds of striving: avoiding and abandoning the unwholesome, bringing forth and maintaining/developing the wholesome. These four exertions are the hallmarks of the energy awakening factor (S48.8). All meditators are well aware just how necessary this quality is for the development of the heart. Starting again and again, never giving in, striving, struggling, fighting.

Right mindfulness is, unsurprisingly, the four application-bases of mindfulness. This whole book is about them. Meaning that we could turn to concentration now if it wasn't for certain meditation schools in real Buddhism that regard mindfulness and concentration not as partners, but as opponents.

These schools regard concentration as being dangerous (no joke!). I have read two books written by adepts of those movements that warn against the danger of starving in samādhi, of the risk of being reborn as a non-percipient being due to concentration, of getting lost in the bliss of jhāna.

These schools take the term insight, vipassanā, to mean a certain specific *meditation technique* – Vipassanā® –, and each of these schools regards their own method to be the only true one, or at least the best. Mindfulness and concentration are considered to be opponents. Only true “insight meditation”, which is based on mindfulness alone, is approved of as being real Buddhist meditation. Concentration, so they say, is a state devoid of mindfulness, and not necessary for liberation. They postulate a kind of “dry” insight without concentration through which one can become a “dry” arahant.

How can something like this come to be? How can someone come up with the idea of reducing the eightfold path to a sevenfold path?¹⁹¹

The practice of calming and collecting the mind is difficult. Time, dedication and a withdrawn lifestyle are required. Not all are ready for this, but some still want to “join the game”. The “they” wants to be competent! It is easier to imagine progress in “insight” than progress in concentration. Neat systems of “stages of insight” that can be conjured up and ticked off are appealing to them.

Now, how do mindfulness and concentration really relate to each other? *How* do they go together?

In the text of our discourse (unabridged on page 339) there is talk of purification of mindfulness in concentration. It is the jhāna factor of equanimity that endows our mindfulness with its true efficacy and brings it to a peak level. The liberated bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā answers a few questions on this:

But, Lady, what is concentration? Which things are the sign of concentration? Which things are the tools of concentration? What is the development of concentration?

– Friend Visākha, *one-peakedness** of the heart is concentration. The four application-bases of mindfulness are the sign of concentration. The four right exertions are the tools of concentration. The exercise, development, and cultivation of these same things is the development of concentration there.¹⁹²

M 44

Sign of concentration (samādhinimitta) has a twofold meaning.^{oo} Firstly, “sign *for* concentration”, that which it focuses on: the four satipaṭṭhānā are the objects for concentration, for instance, the breath, or understanding the collected heart – “the heart is collected.”

oo The genitive-particle “of” in the English translation may lead to a narrowed down understanding. Actually it should be *concentration-sign*.

Secondly, “sign of concentration”, what it “looks” like: when the four satipaṭṭhāna are present the heart is concentrated. And vice versa.

Maybe that’s a bit beyond us or incomprehensible. Venerable Dhammadinnā was conversing with a non-returner after all. But maybe it is the notion that satipaṭṭhāna and concentration are two different paths which obstructs our way. In this case, some instructions that the Buddha gave to a novice – to a beginner – can help. Probably just the job for us:

Having thus abandoned these five hindrances, these imperfections of the heart that weaken wisdom, he abides with the body body-contemplating ... with feelings feeling-contemplating ... with the heart heart-contemplating ... with things thing-contemplating, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having removed greed&grief in regard to the world.

Then the Tathāgata disciplines him further: “Come, bhikkhu, abide with the body body-contemplating, and do not think a thought connected with wishing. Abide with feelings feeling-contemplating, and do not think a thought connected with wishing. Abide with the heart heart-contemplating, and do not think a thought connected with wishing. Abide with things thing-contemplating, and do not think a thought connected with wishing.”^{pp}

With the stilling of applied and sustained thought, he abides having entered the second *jhāna**, which has internal settling and unification of heart without applied and sustained thought, with the pleasure of rapture produced by concentration.¹⁹³

M 125

pp Translations which have “connected with body, feeling, heart, things” are based on the PTS edition of the canon. Most other readings have “connected with wishing (kāma)”, which makes more sense.

Abandoning the hindrances is necessary in order to practise concentration *and* satipaṭṭhāna. The next step on from there is satipaṭṭhāna, then satipaṭṭhāna in the first jhāna.

Here, quite *secluded from wishings*, secluded from unwholesome things, a bhikkhu abides having entered the first jhāna, *which is accompanied by applied and sustained thought*, with the pleasure of rapture produced by seclusion.

from our discourse here

This is the same as satipaṭṭhāna without *thoughts connected with wishing*. But thinking is not over yet. What do meditators think of in the first jhāna? They think of that which provides the pleasure of rapture: the four application-bases of mindfulness. More on this in a minute.

The principle of concentration

Concentration is the eighth path factor, and at the same time one of the seven awakening factors. Right concentration ensures that calm and insight can *occur for him evenly paired*, that *knowing is joined by seeing* or vision. How does concentration provide this? It makes sure that the heart is fit for work:

When his concentrated heart is thus purified, bright, unblemished, without imperfections, malleable, wieldy, steady, and attained to imperturbability, he directs it to the knowledge of the destruction of the drives. He understands according to reality: “This is suffering”; he understands according to reality: “This is the origin of suffering”; he understands according to reality: “This is the cessation of suffering”; he understands according to reality: “This is the practice leading to the cessation of suffering.” He understands according to reality: “These are the drives”; he understands according to reality: “This is the origin of the drives”; he understands accord-

ing to reality: “This is the cessation of the drives”; he understands according to reality: “This is the practice leading to the cessation of the drives.”

For him, knowing and seeing thus, the heart is liberated from the wishing-drive, from the being-drive, from the ignorance-drive. In the liberated one there is the knowledge: “Liberated!” He understands: “Coming-into-the-world has been destroyed, the holy life has been fully lived, the task has been done. There is nothing else beyond this state.”¹⁹⁴

M 39

In the context of our hologram and the level-tool, it has been mentioned a couple of times that complete penetrating knowledge, the all around knowing, is only possible from a viewpoint outside of the particular situation, not as long as we are absorbed into it.

But in order to view the five khandhas or the six domains from outside we would have to leave experience! Is there such a thing?

Again, having completely gone beyond the domain of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, a bhikkhu abides having entered the cessation of perception and feeling. And, having seen with wisdom, his drives are destroyed.¹⁹⁵

M 25

This meditative state of cessation of perception and feeling is far above the four jhānas. It starts from a state of formlessness – neither-perception-nor-non-perception. So, both are not topics of our discourse. And both are probably accessible only to a very few people. This path is called *liberation of the heart, followed by liberation by wisdom*.¹⁹⁶

The other way to penetrate something is through the disclosing of its governing law. But for that too we need at least *one* example of the principle. And it is just this that the jhānas can provide.

Here, quite secluded from wishings, secluded from unwholesome things, a bhikkhu abides having entered the first jhāna, which is accompanied by applied and sustained thought, with the pleasure of rapture produced by seclusion. With the stilling of applied and sustained thought, he abides having entered the second jhāna, which has internal settling and unification of heart without applied and sustained thought, with the pleasure of rapture produced by concentration.

For the other two jhānas see page 339.

The jhānas are not something that happens *in* “normal” experience. They are the higher level from which something is penetrated. Of course, with them we don’t leave experience altogether, but we pass over to a completely different mode. From there the impermanence of the “normal” mode of experience is discernable.

In the first jhāna the sphere of wishing is transcended. The wisher is no longer there. In the second jhāna thinking is transcended. The thinker disappears. And so on, one could say, but the nature of liberation by wisdom is to see the relativity of the respective lower level *as a principle*, and by seeing it thus, to penetrate and understand experience in general and as a whole.

Now the jhānas are in comparison to the respective lower level relatively “eternal”. At least that’s what they feel like. This is accompanied by a sense of enormous bodily and mental well-being. In the second jhāna the observer and the observed converge – *unification of heart*. It is this that all mystics are looking and longing for: unio mystica, merging with the Divine, the Primal Ground, the Source or whatever. It is true that when this unification abates, the impermanence of this blissful state becomes apparent too, but the idea to have met the Eternal, the Soul or even God, may well present itself.

The wandering ascetics of the Cūḷasakuludāyī Sutta (M 79) took the experience in the third jhāna to be the “splendour of the soul”, at the same time it was the highest goal in their practice. They practised seeing without knowing according to reality, that is, wrong seeing.

The kind of wisdom that can apply the first “existential paradigm shift”,¹⁹⁷ the first example of going beyond the “normal” mode of experience, as a template avoids the error. This is possible even without another, even higher level:

Bhikkhus, by means of non-identification, relying on non-identification, abandon and go beyond what is equanimity, what is unified, what is resting on unity. In this way there is the abandonment of it, in this way there is the going beyond it.¹⁹⁸

M 137

And how is this non-identification to be accomplished?

He considers this and understands it thus: “This first jhāna is determined-up and intended-up. But whatever is determined-up and intended-up is impermanent, a thing of cessation.” Standing there, he attains the destruction of the drives. But if he does not attain the destruction of the drives because of that passion for the Dhamma, that delectation in the Dhamma, then with the destruction of the five lower fetters he becomes one due to reappear spontaneously (in the pure realms) and attain final Nibbāna there without ever returning from that world.¹⁹⁹

M 52

This consideration applies to a whole range of concentrated states: to all four jhānas, to the four immeasurable liberations of the heart (based on kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity), and to three of the four formless domains.^{qq} The latter seven are not topics of this book.

qq The fourth formless domain, neither-perception-nor-non-perception, is so subtle that it doesn’t have a background against which it could be considered to be “determined-up”. Most readers will more than likely not find this particularly tragic.

If it is not clear what is so bad about being “determined-up” – the suttas provide even more explicit clues and indications:

Whatever exists there [in the jhānas] that has come to be form, feeling, perception, determinations, and consciousness, he sees these things as impermanent, as suffering, as a disease, as a tumour, as a barb, as a calamity, as an affliction, as alien, as disintegrating, as empty, as not-self. He turns the heart away from these things. Having turned the heart away from these things he directs it towards the deathless property: “This is the peaceful, this is the sublime, namely, the calming of all determinations, the letting go of all acquisition, the destruction of craving, dispassion, cessation, Nibbāna.” Standing there he arrives at the destruction of the drives.²⁰⁰

M 64

Contemplating states of concentration with wisdom is not only a safeguard against getting stuck in mysticism, it is also the most important tool for enabling us to turn the heart away. Why should the jhānas be considered as determined and not as determinations? In states of unification “possession” and “possessor” are the same, therefore the contemplation shifts to “determined”, to emptiness and not-self. Wisdom that has understood the principle knows even without discerning a higher level: the ground of being is determined.

This is the non-identification required.

In the mire of sensuality

Well, first of all we want to abandon *these five hindrances, these imperfections of the heart that weaken wisdom*. And then we notice that it's not so easy! *Thoughts connected with wishing* simply won't give in. And this is the fault of these very same hindrances. The first of them, wishing-will (or sensual desire, sense-desire etc.), *kāmacchanda*, is the mother of all hindrances. It is the wish to wallow in the mire of sensuality in which the other four hindrances also thrive.^{rr}

That brings us to the rather striking title of this chapter. It is not only meant to provide for some suspense (that is already being taken care of by wishing-will itself, see the "In tension" chapter), but also meant as a concession: whoever cannot really relate to the word "wishing", may well substitute it with the word "sensuality" throughout the book. *Kāma* is precisely that which we understand as "sensuality", but only because the cultivation of a calm and collected heart hasn't played an important role in our Western culture for several centuries and thus hasn't left an imprint on our languages.

It is, therefore, not obvious that one can use the senses for more than just getting lost in sensuality. Wishing, *kāma*, is a fundamental form of curiosity, the desire for news, the desire for something new. It is a longing for excitement and fascination:

Bhikkhus, there are these five strands of wishing. What five? Forms cognizable by the eye ... sounds cognizable by the ear ... odours cognizable by the nose ... flavours cognizable by the tongue ... tangibles cognizable by the body that are longed for, desired, fascinating, interesting, connected with wishing and exciting. These are the five five strands of wishing. Now the pleasure and elation that arise dependent on these five five strands of

rr Some lists of the hindrances have wishing-*passion* (*kāmarāga*) in the place of wishing-*will*. Wishing-passion is one of the *five lower fetters*; as such it stands "above" the hindrances, as it were.

wishing, this is called wishing-pleasure – a crappy pleasure, the pleasure of an ordinary person, an ignoble pleasure. I say of this kind of pleasure that it should not be pursued, that it should not be developed, that it should not be cultivated, and that it should be feared.

Here, quite secluded from wishings, secluded from unwholesome things, a bhikkhu abides having entered the first jhāna ... This is called the ease of renunciation, the ease of seclusion, the ease of peace, the ease of awakening. I say of this kind of pleasure that it should be pursued, that it should be developed, that it should be cultivated, and that it should not be feared.²⁰¹

M 139

Longed for, desired, fascinating, interesting, connected with wishing and exciting – not a word here about being pleasant or a thing of ease. The five strands of wishing (kāmagūṇa) can also be understood as being the *objects of sense-pleasure*. Pleasure being the vain attempt to please and ease the longing for fulfilment, for satisfaction. The pleasure of wishing (kāmasukha) arises as a result of an unwise, off-guard application of the five external senses. Understood in this way, it is quite okay to use the term “sensuality” as long as it is not limited to sex. During sex there are certainly longed for touches, juices, fragrances and the rest, but the fascination is due to the tension, excitement, passion. Not even the famous Kāmasūtra describes *better* sex, it just describes *more diversified* sex.

It is also important to understand that sensuality is *transported* via the senses, but it is *not inherent* in the senses. Sensuality is an extra. For in the jhānas sensuality is transcended, but the senses do not cease to function. The five external senses do not come to rest before the formless domains; in the jhānas the channels are still open. If we misunderstand this point we may trip ourselves up on the way to concentration because we may expect “everything” to become black or white or turn transparent. And it is precisely this wrong expectation that will turn into a hindrance itself.

The strands of wishing are an addictive drug. That's where the hindrance of wishing-will draws its power from. It wants to touch them mentally, wants to caress them, engage with them. Therefore, as long as the practitioners aren't able to turn the heart away from wishing-will, the heart won't arrive at stillness.

And every thrill wears off. Something new is always necessary to maintain the kick, an ever fresh, ever increasing dosage, ever more frequent, ever more extreme. That's why the pleasure and elation dependent on these five strands of wishing is a "crappy pleasure". There is no peace, no rest, no well-being to be found in it.

The five outer senses only provide the "data". The *mind is a help* for them, bringing in the fascination. But the mind can also experience the *ease of renunciation*, the *ease of seclusion*, the *ease of peace*. Yes, this is even referred to as the *ease of awakening* because no urge to passion underlies it.

"But it is oh so boring!" Why is it boring? Is it boring because the things we dwell on in states of concentration are flawed or not beautiful? No, in fact it's quite the opposite!

And why does even the crème among the crappy pleasure things become boring? It's because the hoped-for fulfilment has nothing to do with the things themselves, but rather with the wishing. Wishing wants there to be something to wish for. In the manifestation of craving for wishing it wants exciting existence. In the more specific manifestation of wishing-will it wants exciting ... wishing.

First and foremost wishing refers to wishing; only at the tail end does it attach to some thing or another, something arbitrary which will soon lose its attraction. For example we say: "This sports car is my wish." We do not say: "This sports car is my wished-for." Even the quoted universal monarch who *possesses* every thinkable wished-for thing, faces the *exciting* question each day as to which of his marvel-things he could use today for distraction and entertainment. We may not own such spectacular wished-for *objects*, but our *wishing* options are certainly no less exciting.



Equipped with this understanding, we do not get confused when we notice that *kāma* in the suttas quite obviously sometimes means certain things, and sometimes the wishing for these things. Long-serving phenomenologists with their level-tool at hand know that wishing can be such a thing.

The commentaries make a distinction between *vatthukāma* (object-wishing) and *kilesakāma* (defilement-wishing). Some authors sense a paradox here. In reality, however, there is no paradox because in both cases it is one and the same phenomenon. Wishing is the real object of “craving for sensuality” (*kāmatanṇhā*): “I want suspense and excitement.” It is the real object of “taking-up of sensuality” (*kāmupādāna*): “I want there to be something to wish for.” It is the driving force behind the primary hindrance of “sensual desire” (*kāmacchanda*): “The here&now is not good enough. I wish for change and variety.” *We wish for the defilement.* That’s why it is so hard to abandon.

Stuck to the cave and in many ways buried,
 deadlocked a person and sunk in delusion.
 Someone like this is so far from seclusion.
 Wishes in this world are hard to relinquish.
 Those fed by longing are bound – joy in being –,
 hard to find freedom, no others will free them.
 Looking attached at before or thereafter,
 even still longing for earlier *wishes*.²⁰²

Sn 772/773

Allies

Kāma is king. Sometimes kāma is equated with Māra, the tempter. Kāma pervades our everyday world (kāmaloka) on all levels. The word appears in several contexts, all of them bad. Apart from the ones already mentioned, some other leading roles are: the playground of wishing (kāmāvacara) and wishing-thoughts/sensual thoughts (kāmavitakka).

Someone who doesn't meditate, knows no thoughts other than wishing-thoughts. For non-meditators thinking and kāma-thinking are one and the same thing. Thoughts wander from here to there, comparing, judging, wishing, not sitting still, thinking this and that, wanting it to be exciting and interesting – and this can never be the case for long.

What do the thoughts present in the first jhāna think of? As mentioned earlier: they think of their meditation object, they think of the application-bases of mindfulness. And they stay there, stay in one place, in one meeting place. If it is not entirely clear that a thought does not necessarily have to be the restlessness of discursive thinking, I would like to refer back to the “Painful strain of the brain?” chapter once more, to my remarks on reflexive re-duplication of the present. Why do the thoughts in the first jhāna stay in one place even if there is no suspense, no excitement, no tension involved? Because of exactly that. It is soothing. Jhāna is relaxation of tension.

To get away from wishing-thoughts, to abandon wishing-will, we need a better alternative to crappy pleasure, to cheap happiness. To get to know this alternative we have to get away from wishing-will. Something that seems like a dilemma, a catch-22 situation.

Fortunately we have allies. The seven awakening factors. Two of them we already know, mindfulness and thing-investigation. The last two on the list are concentration and its result – equanimity or looking closely. The three middle factors are the fast lane that heads towards concentration: energy, rapture and tranquillity.

Energy is generated by inspiration. Inspiration and joy come about through recollecting the Buddha, Dhamma, Saṅgha or our own inner progress. The resulting rapture is not just confined to the experience of the absorptions, otherwise there would be no solution to the dilemma. If we are doing it right, rapture will arise before jhāna, provided we have distanced ourselves somewhat from the tyranny of wishing. Rapture is the heart's provisions for the journey:

[He considers: “The imperfections of the heart] have in part been given up, expelled, let go of, abandoned, and disposed of by me,” and he gains inspiration in the meaning, gains inspiration in the Dhamma, gains joy connected with the Dhamma. For a joyful one, rapture is produced; for one with a rapturous mind, the body becomes tranquil; one with a tranquil body feels pleasure; for one who feels pleasure, the heart becomes concentrated.²⁰³

M 7

Rapture, tranquillity in the body and in the heart that becomes increasingly contented, the ease of cool, calm and collected concentration; these are all important milestones because they make it just so clear that happiness is not dependent on wishing and gaining. This is the better alternative. It doesn't simply pop up, instead it *comes to the fore* when we let go. And what is it that we let go of?

The mire of sensuality.

How much concentration is necessary?

There are heated debates about this question. What do the suttas say?

Here, Sāriputta, a certain person is a fulfiller in regard to ethics, a fulfiller in regard to concentration, a cultivator in regard to wisdom (only) to a certain extent. With the complete destruction of the five lower fetters, this person is an in-between attainer of Nibbāna [one of five kinds of non-returner] ...

Again, a certain person is a fulfiller in regard to ethics, a cultivator in regard to concentration (only) to a certain extent, a cultivator in regard to wisdom (only) to a certain extent. With the complete destruction of three fetters, with the diminution of passion&hatred&delusion, this person is a once-returner, who having come once more to this world, makes an end to suffering ...

Again, a certain person is a fulfiller in regard to ethics, a cultivator in regard to concentration (only) to a certain extent, a cultivator in regard to wisdom (only) to a certain extent. With the complete destruction of three fetters this person is a seven-timer-at-most [the weakest of three kinds of stream-enterer] who, having run around and wandered on among devas and humans seven times at most, makes an end of suffering ... This is the ninth kind of person passing away with a remainder, who is freed from hell, freed from birth as an animal, freed from the realm of hungry ghosts, freed from the state of loss, from a bad destination, the abyss.²⁰⁴

A9.12

So, for non-returning, fulfilled concentration is required (and of course even more so for arahantship). Below that concentration is necessary *to a certain extent*. How much is “fulfilled concentration”

and how much is “to a certain extent”? Opinions differ as to whether fulfilled concentration means all four jhānas or only the first.²⁰⁵ To a certain extent means this much:

“Bhikkhus, that a bhikkhu who indulges in company, who enjoys company, who is devoted to indulgence in company; who indulges in affiliation, who enjoys affiliation, who is devoted to indulgence in affiliation, will find pleasure in solitude when alone” – this is impossible. “One who does not find pleasure in solitude when alone will take the sign of the heart” – this is impossible. “Not taking the sign of the heart one will fulfil right view” – this is impossible. “Not having fulfilled right view one will fulfil right concentration” – this is impossible. “Not having fulfilled right concentration one will abandon the fetters” – this is impossible. “Not having abandoned the fetters one will realise Nibbāna” – this is impossible.

“Bhikkhus, that a bhikkhu who does not indulge in company, who does not enjoy company, who is not devoted to indulgence in company; who does not indulge in affiliation, who does not enjoy affiliation, who is not devoted to indulgence in affiliation, will find pleasure in solitude when alone” – this is possible. “One who finds pleasure in solitude when alone will take the sign of the heart” – this is possible. “Taking the sign of the heart one will fulfil right view” – this is possible. “Having fulfilled right view one will fulfil right concentration” – this is possible. “Having fulfilled right concentration one will abandon the fetters” – this is possible. “Having abandoned the fetters one will realise Nibbāna” – this is possible.²⁰⁶

Fulfilling right view at stream entry requires taking the sign of the heart (cittassa nimitta). Here the same deliberations apply as for the concentration-sign a few pages earlier. It could be the sign or characteristic of the heart – “concentrated” – or its object – “concentrated heart”. No matter how we want to look at it, the sign has to be taken, grasped, kept steady.

This can only happen after one has abandoned *these five hindrances, these imperfections of the heart that weaken wisdom*. Or, in the terms of our discourse, after *having removed greed&grief in regard to the world*. Which is one and the same thing.

Many people probably have experienced this: We sense that we are hot on the heels of some insight ... and then whoosh, it’s gone again.

The arising of right view is the entry point onto the noble eightfold path. Only then, under the guidance of right view (compare M117), can *right* concentration as a path factor be fulfilled.

So these are the four noble truths.

And what is the difference between the four noble truths and Nibbāna, which has been referred to as the *highest noble truth*?

As far as there are determined things, the noble eightfold path is declared the foremost of them. Those who find inspiration in the noble eightfold path, they find inspiration in the foremost. For those who indeed find inspiration in the foremost, there is foremost fruition.²⁰⁷

A4.34

And that fruition is Nibbāna. The undetermined.

The Discourse – *The direct path*

Bhikkhus, if anyone should develop these four application-bases of mindfulness in this way for seven years, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either final knowledge *here&now**, or if there is still a remainder, non-return.

Let alone seven years, bhikkhus. If anyone should develop these four application-bases of mindfulness in this way for six years ... for five years ... for four years ... for three years ... for two years ... for one year, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either final knowledge here and now, or if there is still a remainder, non-return.

Let alone one year, bhikkhus. If anyone should develop these four application-bases of mindfulness in this way for seven months ... for six months ... for five months ... for four months ... for three months ... for two months ... for one month ... for half a month, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either final knowledge here and now, or if there is still a remainder, non-return.

Let alone half a month, bhikkhus. If anyone should develop these four application-bases of mindfulness in this way for seven days, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either final knowledge here and now, or if there is still a remainder, non-return.

‘Bhikkhus, this is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow&lamentation, for the disappearance of pain&grief, for the attainment of the appropriate method, for the realisation of Nibbāna – namely, the four application-bases of mindfulness.’ What has been said in this way, has been said exactly because of this.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified the bhikkhus delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

Epilogue: The Liberated Heart

When the noble eightfold path, the strategy for the ending of suffering, has been practised successfully, when the third revolution of the four noble truths has taken place, then Nibbāna, the cessation of being, has been attained.

“Would I really want that?”

This hesitation comes from the same place as the question: “But who experiences Nibbāna?” Nibbāna doesn’t have any “who”. Would I want that?

The destruction of greed, hatred and delusion is the undetermined, Nibbāna – as we saw in the “What about Nibbāna?” chapter. As an incentive it may seem a little too little; it may appear too insignificant for it to be desirable as the highest goal.

After reading this book we might get the idea that the ordinary person cannot understand “cessation”. Actually, even at the time of the Buddha “cessation of being” was mistaken for “annihilation of an existing self”.

But this self has never existed *like that!* It is dependent on conditions, or more precisely, on determinations. At the stage of liberation nothing is lost except the chains that fetter us to suffering.

Nevertheless, books have been written by sincere and well-meaning authors who are quick to point out that, “Nibbāna is not all that bad!”²⁰⁸ Does the highest goal in the Buddha’s dispensation really need advertising?

We can well imagine that it is a good thing when ignorance, craving and taking-up cease. But what about when consciousness, the six sense domains and contact have “ceased”? And with the cessation of contact, kamma (action) also ceases (see A 6.63)! What does an arahant do all day when he no longer creates any kamma? Maybe we have read (“Was that in the Abhidhamma or in the Visuddhi-magga?”) that in an arahant only soulless automatic processes are performed instead. Do liberated beings turn into zombies? Is Nibbāna some kind of sacred autism?

How do arahants function?

Some of the conditions in dependent co-arising are gone after their cessation. They no longer exist. The drives are destroyed, ignorance is abandoned. Craving and taking-up are also annihilated.

Other conditions are still there, but they have ceased to be determinations. Determinations *as conditions* are not gone, but *as determinations* they have been stilled. For example, the breath still conditions the body as before, but it doesn't determine it as "my body" any more.

The consciousness of a liberated one, of an arahant, doesn't "have" determinations any longer. They have ceased their function, have stopped performing their determination business. For an arahant they are simply things. Or to put it more precisely: the arahant only experiences things that are no longer "for him". His consciousness doesn't point to anything any more.

Now we have unveiled the mystery as to why an arahant still does something, even if he no longer creates kamma. "His" intentions have ceased intending "him", but now as before there is a pointing to other things, an intentional cross-reference to other things, as described in the "Painful strain of the brain?" chapter. This means that he still knows what a tea cup is for. In his experience there is "ceased" intention: this kind of intention no longer determines an owner, a self. But it still points to purpose and meaning of and in the experienced. He is not an idiot. He knows what he wants and what he is doing. But it is no longer *his* action. It is still *for a purpose* but no longer *for him*. Intention does not point to him as the doer.

The same holds true for his experience in the sense of the senses. (In the following quote only the five outer faculties are listed.)

The five (sense) faculties remain right there, bhikkhus, but then for the instructed noble-disciple ignorance is abandoned there and true knowing arises. With his *fading away** of ignorance and the arising of true

knowing, there is no “I am” for him; there is no “I am this” for him; there is no “I will be”, no “I will not be”, no “I will have form”, no “I will not have form”, no “I will have perception”, no “I will not have perception”; there is no “I will have neither-perception-nor-non-perception” for him.²⁰⁹

S 22.47

In his experience name&form is no longer something acquired. Therefore, contact has ceased:

Contacts touch dependent on acquisition. With what should contacts touch one without acquisition?²¹⁰

Ud14

Name&form has ceased to call out, “Hello, here, it’s me!” Accordingly, with feeling there are no more urges that could condition craving. Feeling has ceased to urge. An anecdote from the life of a realised master clearly illustrates this. At one time when he was gravely ill and hospitalised, one of his disciples asked him whether he still knew pain. His answer:

Feeling and body are still there
according to their natural state.
But in this feeling not at all
do I participate.²¹¹ ss

Atulo Bhikkhu (Luang Pū Dūn)

Craving has been destroyed. Liberation is free from taking-up. Being has ceased. The sunglasses of an existence that wants to be a person do not exist any more. And what about the temporal aspects that could step into being, that could *come to be*?

For a liberated one, an arahant, there is no more ageing, only the change of a body which is no longer his. There is no more dying, only the putting down of the body. He is no longer touched by

ss This aphorism rhymes better in the original Thai.

suffering-things. So how could there possibly be talk of sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair?

The conceit “I am” leads to the various conceptions of how and what I could actually be. With the end of ignorance, these conceptions are transcended.

With going beyond all conceptions, bhikkhu, one is called a “peaceful silent one”. And the peaceful silent one indeed does not come into the world, does not age, does not die; he is not shaken and does not yearn. For there is nothing for him by which he might come into the world. Not coming into the world, how should he age? Not ageing, how should he die? Not dying, how should he be shaken? Not being shaken, how should he yearn?²¹²

M 140

An arahant does not die because he does not come into the world, because he does not bring any lack into the world, not even a world.

Knowing perception, the flood is crossed over;
silent one is no more stuck in possessions,
pulled out the arrow, and heedfully living,
does he not hope for this world nor the next one.²¹³

Sn 779

All this in seven days?

Generations of meditators have probably tried to their utmost to be very mindful “of everything” for seven days. Maybe submitting themselves to strictest retreat conditions for a whole week, so that not a single stirring of their mind might escape their attention, all the while expecting – at least – stream-entry on day seven. And the result? Nothing but frustration and doubt.

How come?

It is not because the Buddha spoke thus in exaggeration when he said that anyone who develops the four application-bases of mindfulness in this way for seven days can expect final knowledge here and now, or at least non-return.

We may remember Part 1 of this book: the development of *sati-paṭṭhāna* begins at stream-entry. Practitioners of that level already know what “internally&externally” means and what things of origin&passing-away are.

If we do not yet know this – and much else – then we would be well-advised to behave like the thousand former dreadlock ascetics. They listened closely to what the Buddha had to say and didn’t assume to already know in advance what it was all supposed to mean.

The application of this little piece of advice in the case at hand: let’s put the discourse first. Let’s try to disclose the meaning in our experience, in our heart. Let’s try not to look for the meaning in other texts about the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*. Not even in this one here.

There are very few explanations of the *sutta* in this book. Instead, tools are introduced that may potentially help us to disclose the meaning – for ourselves, individually, personally, subjectively. There are of course other suitable tools too. Or perhaps we are free of ways of thinking that might block our understanding. In that case we don’t need any tools other than those mentioned in the discourse itself. Only after we have disclosed the meaning for ourselves can it become a truth for us.

We must be prepared to be changed by the Dhamma that the Buddha taught. That is the correct way of grasping the teaching. Only a successful transformation within ourselves can prove its authenticity.

It doesn’t help to engage in historical studies or analytical text comparisons. Neither does it help to ponder and wonder how authentic the transmission of the teaching in the available texts may be. Doing so we won’t arrive at the truth, we will only reap doubt.

As if a person needed a snake, searched for a snake, went scouting for a snake. He might see a large snake and grab it by its coils or its tail. The snake would turn back on him and bite his hand or his arm or one of his limbs. Because of this he would come to death or deadly suffering. Why is that? Because of his wrong grasp of the snake. In the same way some misguided persons study the Dhamma ... Having studied the Dhamma, they do not examine the meaning of those things with wisdom. Not examining the meaning of those things with wisdom, they do not accept those things with inspection. Instead they learn the Dhamma only for the sake of criticising others and for debating. And they do not experience the goal for the sake of which they have studied the Dhamma. Those things, being wrongly grasped by them, conduce to their harm and suffering for a long time. Why is that? Because of the wrong grasp of those things.²¹⁴

M 22

If the phenomenological methods appear suitable to us, we can try to apply them in and to our experience. As soon as we reach their limitations, we rely on the Buddha for all that follows. We put our good resources to use and don't allow the hindrances to throw us off track. We disclose the truth of the Buddha for ourselves, in our hearts. There is nothing else we need to know.

If we know the end of birth and deathlessness, then any further knowledge does not matter.²¹⁵

Khemapatto Bhikkhu (Luang Pū Lā)

PART 3

—

MAHĀSATIPATṬHĀNA SUTTA: APPLICATION-BASES OF MINDFULNESS

Uddeso

Evaṃ me sutāṃ: ekaṃ samayaṃ bhagavā kurūsu viharati kammāsadhammaṃ nāma kurūnaṃ nigamo. Tatra kho bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi – Bhikkhavo’ti. Bhaddante’ti te bhikkhū bhagavato paccassosun. Bhagavā etadavoca –

Ekāyano ayaṃ, bhikkhave, maggo sattānaṃ visuddhiyā sokapari-devānaṃ samatikkamāya dukkhadomanassānaṃ atthaṅgamāya ñāy-assa adhigamāya nibbānassa sacchikiriyāya, yadidaṃ cattāro satipatṭhānā.

Katame cattāro? Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ, vedanāsu vedanānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ, citte cittānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ, dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ.

Uddeso nitṭhito.

Cuddasa kāyānupassanā

Kathañca pana, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati? Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu araṇṇagato vā rukkhamaṇagato vā suṇṇāgāragato vā nisīdati pallaṅkaṃ ābhujitvā ujum kāyaṃ paṇidhāya parimukhaṃ satim upaṭṭhapetvā.

Introduction

Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was living among the Kurus. It was a town of the Kurus named Kammāsa-dhamma. There indeed the Blessed One addressed the bhikkhus thus: “Bhikkhus.” – “Venerable sir,” the bhikkhus replied. The Blessed One said this:

“Bhikkhus, this is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow&lamentation, for the disappearance of pain&grief, for the attainment of the appropriate method, for the realisation of Nibbāna – namely, the four application-bases of mindfulness.

Which four? Here, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having removed greed&grief in regard to the world. He abides with feelings feeling-contemplating, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having removed greed&grief in regard to the world. He abides with the heart heart-contemplating, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having removed greed&grief in regard to the world. He abides with things thing-contemplating, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having removed greed&grief in regard to the world.

Fourteen Body Contemplations

And how, bhikkhus, does a bhikkhu abide with the body body-contemplating? Here a bhikkhu, gone to the forest or to the root of a tree or to an empty hut, sits down; having folded his legs into a throne posture, set the body erect, and established mindfulness all around ready-to-use.

Ānāpānappabbaṃ

So satova assasati, satova passasati. Dīghaṃ vā assasanto dīghaṃ assasāmi'ti pajānāti, dīghaṃ vā passasanto dīghaṃ passasāmi'ti pajānāti. Rassāṃ vā assasanto rassāṃ assasāmi'ti pajānāti, rassāṃ vā passasanto rassāṃ passasāmi'ti pajānāti. Sabbakāyapaṭisaṃvedī assasissāmi'ti sikkhati, sabbakāyapaṭisaṃvedī passasissāmi'ti sikkhati. Passambhayaṃ kāyasaṅkhāraṃ assasissāmi'ti sikkhati, passambhayaṃ kāyasaṅkhāraṃ passasissāmi'ti sikkhati.

Seyyathāpi, bhikkhave, dakkho bhamakāro vā bhamakārantevāsī vā dīghaṃ vā añchanto dīghaṃ añchāmi'ti pajānāti, rassāṃ vā añchanto rassāṃ añchāmi'ti pajānāti, evameva kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu dīghaṃ vā assasanto dīghaṃ assasāmi'ti pajānāti, dīghaṃ vā passasanto dīghaṃ passasāmi'ti pajānāti, rassāṃ vā assasanto rassāṃ assasāmi'ti pajānāti, rassāṃ vā passasanto rassāṃ passasāmi'ti pajānāti, sabbakāyapaṭisaṃvedī assasissāmi'ti sikkhati, sabbakāyapaṭisaṃvedī passasissāmi'ti sikkhati, passambhayaṃ kāyasaṅkhāraṃ assasissāmi'ti sikkhati, passambhayaṃ kāyasaṅkhāraṃ passasissāmi'ti sikkhati.

Iti ajjhataṃ vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati, bahiddhā vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati, ajjhatabhiddhā vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati. Samudayadhammānupassī vā kāyasmim viharati, vayadhammānupassī vā kāyasmim viharati, samudayavayadhammānupassī vā kāyasmim viharati. Atthi kāyo'ti vā panassa sati paccupaṭṭhitā hoti yāvadeva ñāṇamattāya paṭissatimattāya, anissito ca viharati, na ca kiñci loke upādiyati. Evampi kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati.

Ānāpānappabbaṃ niṭṭhitaṃ.

Breathing in and out

Ever mindful he breathes in, ever mindful he breathes out. Breathing in long, he understands: 'I breathe in long'; or breathing out long, he understands: 'I breathe out long.' Breathing in short, he understands: 'I breathe in short'; or breathing out short, he understands: 'I breathe out short.' He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in experiencing the whole body'; he trains thus: 'I shall breathe out experiencing the whole body.' He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in calming body-determination'; he trains thus: 'I shall breathe out calming body-determination.'

Just as a skilled lathe-operator or his apprentice, when making a long turn, understands: 'I make a long turn'; or, when making a short turn, understands: 'I make a short turn'; so too, breathing in long, a bhikkhu understands: 'I breathe in long'; or breathing out long, he understands: 'I breathe out long.' Breathing in short, he understands: 'I breathe in short'; or breathing out short, he understands: 'I breathe out short.' He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in experiencing the whole body'; he trains thus: 'I shall breathe out experiencing the whole body.' He trains thus: 'I shall breathe in calming body-determination'; he trains thus: 'I shall breathe out calming body-determination.'

In this way he abides internally with the body body-contemplating, or he abides externally with the body body-contemplating, or he abides internally&externally with the body body-contemplating. Or else contemplating as a thing of origin he abides with the body, or contemplating as a thing of passing-away he abides with the body, or contemplating as a thing of origin&passing-away he abides with the body. Or else 'there is a body' mindfulness is present for him, just for the right measure of knowing and against-the-grain mindfulness. And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating.

Iriyāpathapabbam

Puna caparam, bhikkhave, bhikkhu gacchanto vā gacchāmi'ti pajānāti, ṭhito vā ṭhitomhi'ti pajānāti, nisinno vā nisinnomhi'ti pajānāti, sayāno vā sayānomhi'ti pajānāti, yathā yathā vā panassa kāyo paṇihito hoti, tathā tathā nam pajānāti.

Iti ajjhataṃ vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati, bahiddhā vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati, ajjhatabahiddhā vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati. Samudayadhammānupassī vā kāyasmiṃ viharati, vayadhammānupassī vā kāyasmiṃ viharati, samudayavayadhammānupassī vā kāyasmiṃ viharati. Atthi kāyo'ti vā panassa sati paccupaṭṭhitā hoti yāvadeva ñāṇamattāya paṭissatimattāya, anissito ca viharati, na ca kiñci loke upādiyati. Evampi kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati.

Iriyāpathapabbam niṭṭhitam.

Sampajānapabbam

Puna caparam, bhikkhave, bhikkhu abhikkante paṭikkante sampajānakārī hoti, ālokite vilokite sampajānakārī hoti, samiñjite pasārite sampajānakārī hoti, saṅghāṭipattacīvaradhāraṇe sampajānakārī hoti, asite pite khāyite sāyite sampajānakārī hoti, uccārapassāvakamme sampajānakārī hoti, gate ṭhite nisinne sutte jāgarite bhāsīte tuṇhī bhāve sampajānakārī hoti.

Iti ajjhataṃ vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati ...

Anissito ca viharati, na ca kiñci loke upādiyati. Evampi kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati.

Sampajānapabbam niṭṭhitam.

Body postures

Again, bhikkhus, when walking, a bhikkhu understands: 'I walk'; when standing, he understands: 'I stand'; when sitting, he understands: 'I sit'; when lying down, he understands: 'I lie down'; or however his body is disposed, in that way he understands it.

In this way he abides internally with the body body-contemplating, or he abides externally with the body body-contemplating, or he abides internally&externally with the body body-contemplating. Or else contemplating as a thing of origin he abides with the body, or contemplating as a thing of passing-away he abides with the body, or contemplating as a thing of origin&passing-away he abides with the body. Or else 'there is a body' mindfulness is present for him, just for the right measure of knowing and against-the-grain mindfulness. And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This too, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating.

Acting with full awareness

Again, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu is one who acts fully aware when going forward and returning; who acts fully aware when looking ahead and looking away; who acts fully aware when flexing and extending his limbs; who acts fully aware when donning the outer robe, bowl, and robes; who acts fully aware when eating, drinking, chewing, and tasting; who acts fully aware when defecating and urinating; who acts fully aware when walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking up, talking, and keeping silent.

In this way he abides internally with the body body-contemplating ...

And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This too, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating.

Paṭikkūlamanasikārapabbam

Puna caparam, bhikkhave, bhikkhu imeva kāyaṃ uddham pādatalā adho kesamatthakā tacapariyantam pūram nānappakārassa asucino paccavekkhati – ‘Atthi imasmim kāye kesā lomā nakhā dantā taco, maṃsam nhāru aṭṭhi aṭṭhimiñjam vakkam hadayaṃ yakanam kilomakam pihakam papphāsam antam antaguṇam udariyaṃ karisaṃ, pittaṃ semham pubbo lohitaṃ sedo medo assu vasā kheḷo singhāṇikā lasikā muttan’ti.

Seyyathāpi, bhikkhave, ubhatomukhā putoli pūrā nānāvihitassa dhaññassa, seyyathidaṃ sālīnaṃ vihinam muggānaṃ māsānaṃ tilānaṃ taṇḍulānaṃ. Tamenam cakkhumā puriso muñcitvā paccavekkheyya – ‘Ime sāli ime vihi ime muggā ime māsā ime tilā ime taṇḍulā’ti. Evameva kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu imeva kāyaṃ uddham pādatalā adho kesamatthakā tacapariyantam pūram nānappakārassa asucino paccavekkhati – ‘Atthi imasmim kāye kesā lomā nakhā dantā taco, maṃsam nhāru aṭṭhi aṭṭhimiñjam vakkam hadayaṃ yakanam kilomakam pihakam papphāsam antam antaguṇam udariyaṃ karisaṃ, pittaṃ semham pubbo lohitaṃ sedo medo assu vasā kheḷo singhāṇikā lasikā muttan’ti.

Iti ajjhattam vā ... pe ...

Evampi kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati.

Paṭikkūlamanasikārapabbam niṭṭhitam

Attention against the slope

Again, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu reflects on this very body up from the soles of the feet and down from the top of the hair, enveloped by skin, and full of many kinds of impurities: 'In this body there are head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, bone-marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, diaphragm, spleen, lungs, large intestines, small intestines, contents of the stomach, faeces, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, saliva, snot, synovia, and urine.'

Just as if a sack with openings at both ends were full of many sorts of grain, such as wheat, rice, mung beans, kidney beans, sesame seeds, and husked rice, and a man with good eyesight were to open it and reflect on it: 'This is wheat, this is rice, these are mung beans, these are kidney beans, these are sesame seeds, this is husked rice'; in the same way, a bhikkhu reflects on this very body up from the soles of the feet and down from the top of the hair, enveloped by skin, and full of many kinds of impurities: 'In this body there are head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, bone-marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, diaphragm, spleen, lungs, large intestines, small intestines, contents of the stomach, faeces, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, saliva, snot, synovia, and urine.'

In this way he abides internally ...

This too, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating.

Dhātumanasikārapabbam

Puna caparam, bhikkhave, bhikkhu imameva kāyaṃ yathāṭṭhitam yathāpaṇihitam dhātuso paccavekkhati – ‘Atthi imasmim kāye pathavidhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātū’ti

Seyyathāpi, bhikkhave, dakkho goghātako vā goghātakantevāsī vā gāvim vadhivā catumahāpathe bilaso vibhajivā nisinno assa, evameva kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu imameva kāyaṃ yathāṭṭhitam yathāpaṇihitam dhātuso paccavekkhati – ‘Atthi imasmim kāye pathavidhātu āpodhātu tejodhātu vāyodhātū’ti.

Iti ajjhataṃ vā ... pe ... evampi kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati.

Dhātumanasikārapabbam niṭṭhitam

Navasivathikapabbam

Puna caparam, bhikkhave, bhikkhu seyyathāpi passeyya sarīraṃ sivathikāya chaḍḍitaṃ ekāhamataṃ vā dvihamataṃ vā tihamataṃ vā uddhumātakam vinīlakam vipubbakajātaṃ. So imameva kāyaṃ upasaṃharati – ‘Ayampi kho kāyo evaṃdhammo evaṃbhāvī evaṃanatīto’ti.

Iti ajjhataṃ vā ... pe ... evampi kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati.

Puna caparam, bhikkhave, bhikkhu seyyathāpi passeyya sarīraṃ sivathikāya chaḍḍitaṃ kākehi vā khajjamānaṃ kulalehi vā khajjamānaṃ gijjhehi vā khajjamānaṃ kaṅkehi vā khajjamānaṃ sunakhehi vā khajjamānaṃ byagghehi vā khajjamānaṃ dīpihi vā khajjamānaṃ siṅgālehi vā khajjamānaṃ vividhehi vā paṇakajātehi khajjamānaṃ. So imameva kāyaṃ upasaṃharati – ‘Ayampi kho kāyo evaṃdhammo evaṃbhāvī evaṃanatīto’ti.

Attention to the properties

Again, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu reflects on this very body, however it is placed, however it is disposed, by way of properties: ‘In this body there is the earth property, the water property, the fire property, and the wind property.’

Just as if a skilled butcher or his apprentice, having killed a cow, would sit at a crossroads, having cut it up into pieces; in the same way, a bhikkhu reflects on this very body, however it is placed, however it is disposed, by way of properties: ‘In this body there is the earth property, the water property, the fire property, and the wind property.’

In this way he abides internally ...

This too, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating.

Nine charnel grounds

Again, bhikkhus, as if a bhikkhu were to see a corpse thrown aside in a charnel ground, one, two, or three days dead, bloated, livid, and oozing matter, he compares this very body with it: ‘This body too is such a thing, has such a nature, has not gone beyond this.’

In this way he abides internally ...

This too, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating.

Again, bhikkhus, as if a bhikkhu were to see a corpse thrown aside in a charnel ground, being devoured by crows, hawks, vultures, herons, dogs, tigers, leopards, jackals, or various kinds of worms, he compares this very body with it: ‘This body too is such a thing, has such a nature, has not gone beyond this.’

Iti ajjhattaṃ vā ... pe ... evampi kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati.

Puna caparaṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu seyyathāpi passeyya sarīraṃ sivathikāya chaḍḍitaṃ aṭṭhikasaṅkhalikaṃ samaṃsalohitaṃ nhārusambandhaṃ ... pe ... aṭṭhikasaṅkhalikaṃ nimaṃsalohitamakkhitaṃ nhārusambandhaṃ ... pe ... aṭṭhikasaṅkhalikaṃ apagatamaṃsalohitaṃ nhārusambandhaṃ ... pe ... aṭṭhikāni apagatasambandhāni disā vidisā vikkhittāni, aññena hatthaṭṭhikaṃ aññena pādaṭṭhikaṃ aññena jaṅghaṭṭhikaṃ aññena ūruṭṭhikaṃ aññena kaṭaṭṭhikaṃ aññena pitṭhi-kaṇṭakaṃ aññena sīsakaṭāhaṃ. So imameva kāyaṃ upasaṃharati – ‘Ayampi kho kāyo evaṃdhammo evaṃbhāvī evaṃanatīto’ti.

Iti ajjhattaṃ vā ... pe ... evampi kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati.

Puna caparaṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu seyyathāpi passeyya sarīraṃ sivathikāya chaḍḍitaṃ aṭṭhikāni setāni saṅkhavaṇṇapaṭibhāgāni ... pe ... aṭṭhikāni puñjakitāni terovassikāni ... pe ... aṭṭhikāni pūṭini cuṇṇakajātāni. So imameva kāyaṃ upasaṃharati – ‘Ayampi kho kāyo evaṃdhammo evaṃbhāvī evaṃanatīto’ti.

Iti ajjhattaṃ vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati, bahiddhā vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati, ajjhattabahiddhā vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati. Samudayadhammānupassī vā kāyasmim viharati, vayadhammānupassī vā kāyasmim viharati, samudayavayadhammānupassī vā kāyasmim viharati. ‘Atthi kāyo’ti vā panassa sati paccupaṭṭhitā hoti yāvadeva ñāṇamattāya paṭissatimattāya, anissito ca viharati, na ca kiñci loke upādiyati. Evampi kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati.

Navasivathikapabbaṃ niṭṭhitaṃ.

Cuddasa kāyānupassanā niṭṭhita.

In this way he abides internally ... This too, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating.

Again, bhikkhus, as if a bhikkhu were to see a corpse thrown aside in a charnel ground, a skeleton with flesh and blood, held together with sinews ... a fleshless skeleton smeared with blood, held together with sinews ... a skeleton without flesh and blood, held together with sinews ... disconnected bones scattered in all directions – here a hand-bone, there a foot-bone, here a shin-bone, there a thigh-bone, here a hip-bone, there a back-bone, there a skull – he compares this very body with it: ‘This body too is such a thing, has such a nature, has not gone beyond this.’

In this way he abides internally ...

This too, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating.

Again, bhikkhus, as if a bhikkhu were to see a corpse thrown aside in a charnel ground, bones bleached white, the colour of shells ... bones heaped up, years old ... rotting and crumbled to dust, he compares this very body with it: ‘This body too is such a thing, has such a nature, has not gone beyond this.’

In this way he abides internally with the body body-contemplating, or he abides externally with the body body-contemplating, or he abides internally&externally with the body body-contemplating. Or else contemplating as a thing of origin he abides with the body, or contemplating as a thing of passing-away he abides with the body, or contemplating as a thing of origin&passing-away he abides with the body. Or else ‘there is a body’ mindfulness is present for him, just for the right measure of knowing and against-the-grain mindfulness. And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This too, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating.

Vedanānupassanā

Kathañca pana, bhikkhave, bhikkhu vedanāsu vedanānupassī viharati? Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sukhaṃ vā vedanaṃ vedayamāno ‘Sukhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayāmi’ti pajānāti. Dukkhaṃ vā vedanaṃ vedayamāno ‘Dukkhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayāmi’ti pajānāti. Adukkhamasukhaṃ vā vedanaṃ vedayamāno ‘Adukkhamasukhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayāmi’ti pajānāti.

Sāmisam vā sukhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayamāno ‘Sāmisam sukhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayāmi’ti pajānāti. Nirāmisam vā sukhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayamāno ‘Nirāmisam sukhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayāmi’ti pajānāti. Sāmisam vā dukkhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayamāno ‘Sāmisam dukkhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayāmi’ti pajānāti. Nirāmisam vā dukkhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayamāno ‘Nirāmisam dukkhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayāmi’ti pajānāti. Sāmisam vā adukkhamasukhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayamāno ‘Sāmisam adukkhamasukhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayāmi’ti pajānāti. Nirāmisam vā adukkhamasukhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayamāno ‘Nirāmisam adukkhamasukhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayāmi’ti pajānāti.

Iti ajjhataṃ vā vedanāsu vedanānupassī viharati, bahiddhā vā vedanāsu vedanānupassī viharati, ajjhattabahiddhā vā vedanāsu vedanānupassī viharati. Samudayadhammānupassī vā vedanāsu viharati, vayadhammānupassī vā vedanāsu viharati, samudayavayadhammānupassī vā vedanāsu viharati. ‘Atthi vedanā’ti vā panassa sati paccupaṭṭhitā hoti yāvadeva ñāṇamattāya paṭissatimattāya, anisito ca viharati, na ca kiñci loke upādiyati. Evampi kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu vedanāsu vedanānupassī viharati.

Vedanānupassanā niṭṭhitā.

Contemplation of Feeling

And how, bhikkhus, does a bhikkhu abide with feelings feeling-contemplating? Here, when feeling a pleasant feeling, a bhikkhu understands: 'I feel a pleasant feeling'; when feeling a painful feeling, he understands: 'I feel a painful feeling'; when feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, he understands: 'I feel a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling.'

When feeling a pleasant feeling of the flesh, he understands: 'I feel a pleasant feeling of the flesh'; when feeling a pleasant feeling not of the flesh, he understands: 'I feel a pleasant feeling not of the flesh'; when feeling a painful feeling of the flesh, he understands: 'I feel a painful feeling of the flesh'; when feeling a painful feeling not of the flesh, he understands: 'I feel a painful feeling not of the flesh'; when feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling of the flesh, he understands: 'I feel a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling of the flesh'; when feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling not of the flesh, he understands: 'I feel a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling not of the flesh.'

In this way he abides internally with feelings feeling-contemplating, or he abides externally with feelings feeling-contemplating, or he abides internally&externally with feelings feeling-contemplating. Or else contemplating as things of origin he abides with feelings, or contemplating as things of passing-away he abides with feelings, or contemplating as things of origin&passing-away he abides with feelings. Or else 'there is feeling' mindfulness is present for him, just for the right measure of knowing and against-the-grain mindfulness. And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with feelings feeling-contemplating.

Cittānupassanā

Kathañca pana, bhikkhave, bhikkhu citte cittānupassī viharati? Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sarāgaṃ vā cittaṃ ‘sarāgaṃ cittaṃ’ti pajānāti, vītarāgaṃ vā cittaṃ ‘vītarāgaṃ cittaṃ’ti pajānāti. Sadosaṃ vā cittaṃ ‘sadosaṃ cittaṃ’ti pajānāti, vītadosaṃ vā cittaṃ ‘vītadosaṃ cittaṃ’ti pajānāti. Samohaṃ vā cittaṃ ‘samohaṃ cittaṃ’ti pajānāti, vītamohaṃ vā cittaṃ ‘vītamohaṃ cittaṃ’ti pajānāti. Saṅkhittaṃ vā cittaṃ ‘saṅkhittaṃ cittaṃ’ti pajānāti, vikkhittaṃ vā cittaṃ ‘vikkhittaṃ cittaṃ’ti pajānāti. Mahaggataṃ vā cittaṃ ‘mahaggataṃ cittaṃ’ti pajānāti, amahaggataṃ vā cittaṃ ‘amahaggataṃ cittaṃ’ti pajānāti. Sauttaraṃ vā cittaṃ ‘sauttaraṃ cittaṃ’ti pajānāti, anuttaraṃ vā cittaṃ ‘anuttaraṃ cittaṃ’ti pajānāti. Samāhitaṃ vā cittaṃ ‘samāhitaṃ cittaṃ’ti pajānāti, asamāhitaṃ vā cittaṃ ‘asamāhitaṃ cittaṃ’ti pajānāti. Vimuttaṃ vā cittaṃ ‘vimuttaṃ cittaṃ’ti pajānāti, avimuttaṃ vā cittaṃ ‘avimuttaṃ cittaṃ’ti pajānāti.

Iti ajjhataṃ vā citte cittānupassī viharati, bahiddhā vā citte cittānupassī viharati, ajjhatabhiddhā vā citte cittānupassī viharati. Samudayadhammānupassī vā cittasmiṃ viharati, vayadhammānupassī vā cittasmiṃ viharati, samudayavayadhammānupassī vā cittasmiṃ viharati. ‘Atthi cittaṃ’ti vā panassa sati paccupaṭṭhitā hoti yāvadeva ñāṇamattāya paṭissatimattāya, anissito ca viharati, na ca kiñci loke upādiyati. Evampi kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu citte cittānupassī viharati.

Cittānupassanā niṭṭhitā.

Contemplation of the Heart

And how, bhikkhus, does a bhikkhu abide with the heart heart-contemplating? Here a bhikkhu understands a heart with passion: 'The heart is with passion.' Or he understands a heart without passion: 'The heart is without passion.' Or he understands a heart with hatred: 'The heart is with hatred.' Or he understands a heart without hatred: 'The heart is without hatred.' Or he understands a heart with delusion: 'The heart is with delusion.' Or he understands a heart without delusion: 'The heart is without delusion.' Or he understands a collected heart: 'The heart is collected.' Or he understands a scattered heart: 'The heart is scattered.' Or he understands an expanded heart: 'The heart is expanded.' Or he understands a not expanded heart: 'The heart is not expanded.' Or he understands a surpassed heart: 'The heart is surpassed.' Or he understands an unsurpassed heart: 'The heart is unsurpassed.' Or he understands a concentrated heart: 'The heart is concentrated.' Or he understands an unconcentrated heart: 'The heart is unconcentrated.' Or he understands a liberated heart: 'The heart is liberated.' Or he understands an unliberated heart: 'The heart is unliberated.'

In this way he abides internally with the heart heart-contemplating, or he abides externally with the heart heart-contemplating, or he abides internally&externally with the heart heart-contemplating. Or else contemplating as a thing of origin he abides with the heart, or contemplating as a thing of passing-away he abides with the heart, or contemplating as a thing of origin&passing-away he abides with the heart. Or else 'there is heart' mindfulness is present for him, just for the right measure of knowing and against-the-grain mindfulness. And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with the heart heart-contemplating.

Dhammānupassanā

Kathañca pana, bhikkhave, bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati? Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati pañcasu nīvaraṇesu. Kathañca pana, bhikkhave, bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati pañcasu nīvaraṇesu?

Nīvaraṇapabbam

Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu santaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ kāmaccandaṃ ‘atthi me ajjhattaṃ kāmaccando’ti pajānāti, asantaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ kāmaccandaṃ ‘natthi me ajjhattaṃ kāmaccando’ti pajānāti, yathā ca anuppannassa kāmaccandassa uppādo hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca uppannassa kāmaccandassa pahānaṃ hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca pahīnassa kāmaccandassa āyatim anuppādo hoti tañca pajānāti.

Santaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ byāpādaṃ ‘atthi me ajjhattaṃ byāpādo’ti pajānāti, asantaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ byāpādaṃ ‘natthi me ajjhattaṃ byāpādo’ti pajānāti, yathā ca anuppannassa byāpādassa uppādo hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca uppannassa byāpādassa pahānaṃ hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca pahīnassa byāpādassa āyatim anuppādo hoti tañca pajānāti.

Santaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ thinamiddhaṃ ‘atthi me ajjhattaṃ thinamiddhaṃ’ti pajānāti, asantaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ thinamiddhaṃ ‘natthi me ajjhattaṃ thinamiddhaṃ’ti pajānāti, yathā ca anuppannassa thinamiddhassa uppādo hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca uppannassa thinamiddhassa pahānaṃ hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca pahīnassa thinamiddhassa āyatim anuppādo hoti tañca pajānāti.

Contemplation of Things

And how, bhikkhus, does a bhikkhu abide with things thing-contemplating? Here a bhikkhu abides with things thing-contemplating in terms of the five hindrances. And how does a bhikkhu abide with things thing-contemplating in terms of the five hindrances?

The hindrances

Here, wishing-will being internally present, a bhikkhu understands: 'Wishing-will is internally present for me'; or wishing-will not being internally present, he understands: 'Wishing-will is not internally present for me.' And how there is the arising of unarisen wishing-will, and how there is the abandoning of arisen wishing-will, and how there is the future non-arising of abandoned wishing-will, that he also understands.

Or, ill will being internally present, a bhikkhu understands: 'Ill will is internally present for me'; or ill will not being internally present, he understands: 'Ill will is not internally present for me.' And how there is the arising of unarisen ill will, and how there is the abandoning of arisen ill will, and how there is the future non-arising of abandoned ill will, that he also understands.

Or, sloth&torpor being internally present, a bhikkhu understands: 'Sloth&torpor is internally present for me'; or sloth&torpor not being internally present, he understands: 'Sloth&torpor is not internally present for me.' And how there is the arising of unarisen sloth&torpor, and how there is the abandoning of arisen sloth&torpor, and how there is the future non-arising of abandoned sloth&torpor, that he also understands.

Santaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ uddhaccakukkuccaṃ ‘atthi me ajjhattaṃ uddhaccakukkuccaṃ’ti pajānāti, asantaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ uddhaccakukkuccaṃ ‘natthi me ajjhattaṃ uddhaccakukkuccaṃ’ti pajānāti, yathā ca anuppannassa uddhaccakukkuccassa uppādo hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca uppannassa uddhaccakukkuccassa pahānaṃ hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca pahīnassa uddhaccakukkuccassa āyatimānupapādo hoti tañca pajānāti.

Santaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ vicikicchāṃ ‘atthi me ajjhattaṃ vicikicchā’ti pajānāti, asantaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ vicikicchāṃ ‘natthi me ajjhattaṃ vicikicchā’ti pajānāti, yathā ca anuppannāya vicikicchāya uppādo hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca uppannāya vicikicchāya pahānaṃ hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca pahīnāya vicikicchāya āyatimānupapādo hoti tañca pajānāti.

Iti ajjhattaṃ vā dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati, bahiddhā vā dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati, ajjhatabhiddhā vā dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati. Samudayadhammānupassī vā dhammesu viharati, vayadhammānupassī vā dhammesu viharati, samudaya-vayadhammānupassī vā dhammesu viharati. ‘Atthi dhammā’ti vā panassa sati paccupaṭṭhitā hoti yāvadeva ñāṇamattāya paṭissati-mattāya, anissito ca viharati, na ca kiñci loke upādiyati. Evampi kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati pañcasu nīvaraṇesu.

Nīvaraṇapabbhaṃ niṭṭhitaṃ.

Or, restlessness&remorse being internally present, a bhikkhu understands: 'Restlessness&remorse is internally present for me'; or restlessness&remorse not being internally present, he understands: 'Restlessness&remorse is not internally present for me.' And how there is the arising of unarisen restlessness&remorse, and how there is the abandoning of arisen restlessness&remorse, and how there is the future non-arising of abandoned restlessness&remorse, that he also understands.

Or, doubt being internally present, a bhikkhu understands: 'Doubt is internally present for me'; or doubt not being internally present, he understands: 'Doubt is not internally present for me.' And how there is the arising of unarisen doubt, and how there is the abandoning of arisen doubt, and how there is the future non-arising of abandoned doubt, that he also understands.

In this way he abides internally with things thing-contemplating, or he abides externally with things thing-contemplating, or he abides internally&externally with things thing-contemplating. Or else contemplating as things of origin he abides with things, or contemplating as things of passing-away he abides with things, or contemplating as things of origin&passing-away he abides with things. Or else 'there is things' mindfulness is present for him, just for the right measure of knowing and against-the-grain mindfulness. And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with things thing-contemplating in terms of the five hindrances.

Khandhapabbam

Puna caparam, bhikkhave, bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati pañcasu upādānakkhandhesu. Kathaṇca pana, bhikkhave, bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati pañcasu upādānakkhandhesu? Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu – ‘iti rūpaṃ, iti rūpassa samudayo, iti rūpassa atthaṅgamo; iti vedanā, iti vedanāya samudayo, iti vedanāya atthaṅgamo; iti saññā, iti saññāya samudayo, iti saññāya atthaṅgamo; iti saṅkhārā, iti saṅkhārānaṃ samudayo, iti saṅkhārānaṃ atthaṅgamo, iti viññāṇaṃ, iti viññāṇassa samudayo, iti viññāṇassa atthaṅgamo’ti – iti ajjhataṃ vā dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati, bahiddhā vā dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati, ajjhatabhiddhā vā dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati. Samudaya-dhammānupassī vā dhammesu viharati, vayadhammānupassī vā dhammesu viharati, samudayavayadhammānupassī vā dhammesu viharati. ‘Atthi dhammā’ti vā panassa sati paccupaṭṭhitā hoti yāvadeva nāṇamattāya paṭissatimattāya, anissito ca viharati, na ca kiñci loke upādiyati. Evampi kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati pañcasu upādānakkhandhesu.

Khandhapabbam niṭṭhitam.

Āyatanapabbam

Puna caparam, bhikkhave, bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati chasu ajjhattikabāhiresu āyatanesu. Kathaṇca pana, bhikkhave, bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati chasu ajjhattikabāhiresu āyatanesu?

Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu cakkhuṇca pajānāti, rūpe ca pajānāti, yañca tadubhayaṃ paṭicca uppajjati saṃyojanaṃ tañca pajānāti, yathā ca anuppannassa saṃyojanassa uppādo hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca

The heaps

Again a bhikkhu abides with things thing-contemplating in terms of the five taking-up-heaps. And how does a bhikkhu abide with things thing-contemplating in terms of the five taking-up-heaps? Here a bhikkhu [understands]: ‘Such is form, such is the origin of form, such is the disappearance of form; such is feeling, such is the origin of feeling, such is the disappearance of feeling; such is perception, such is the origin of perception, such is the disappearance of perception; such are determinations, such is the origin of determinations, such is the disappearance of determinations; such is consciousness, such is the origin of consciousness, such is the disappearance of consciousness.’

In this way he abides internally with things thing-contemplating, or he abides externally with things thing-contemplating, or he abides internally&externally with things thing-contemplating. Or else contemplating as things of origin he abides with things, or contemplating as things of passing-away he abides with things, or contemplating as things of origin&passing-away he abides with things. Or else ‘there is things’ mindfulness is present for him, just for the right measure of knowing and against-the-grain mindfulness. And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with things thing-contemplating in terms of the five taking-up-heaps.

The domains

Again a bhikkhu abides with things thing-contemplating in terms of the six internal&external domains. And how does a bhikkhu abide with things thing-contemplating in terms of the six internal&external domains? Here a bhikkhu understands the eye, and he understands forms, and what the fetter is that arises dependent on both, that he understands too. And he understands how there is the arising of an unarisen fetter; and he understands how there is the

uppannassa saṃyojanassa pahānaṃ hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca pahīnassa saṃyojanassa āyatim anuppādo hoti tañca pajānāti.

Sotañca pajānāti, sadde ca pajānāti, yañca tadubhayaṃ paṭicca uppajjati saṃyojanaṃ tañca pajānāti, yathā ca anuppannassa saṃyojanassa uppādo hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca uppannassa saṃyojanassa pahānaṃ hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca pahīnassa saṃyojanassa āyatim anuppādo hoti tañca pajānāti.

Ghānañca pajānāti, gandhe ca pajānāti, yañca tadubhayaṃ paṭicca uppajjati saṃyojanaṃ tañca pajānāti, yathā ca anuppannassa saṃyojanassa uppādo hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca uppannassa saṃyojanassa pahānaṃ hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca pahīnassa saṃyojanassa āyatim anuppādo hoti tañca pajānāti.

Jivhañca pajānāti, rase ca pajānāti, yañca tadubhayaṃ paṭicca uppajjati saṃyojanaṃ tañca pajānāti, yathā ca anuppannassa saṃyojanassa uppādo hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca uppannassa saṃyojanassa pahānaṃ hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca pahīnassa saṃyojanassa āyatim anuppādo hoti tañca pajānāti.

Kāyañca pajānāti, phoṭṭhabbe ca pajānāti, yañca tadubhayaṃ paṭicca uppajjati saṃyojanaṃ tañca pajānāti, yathā ca anuppannassa saṃyojanassa uppādo hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca uppannassa saṃyojanassa pahānaṃ hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca pahīnassa saṃyojanassa āyatim anuppādo hoti tañca pajānāti.

Manañca pajānāti, dhamme ca pajānāti, yañca tadubhayaṃ paṭicca uppajjati saṃyojanaṃ tañca pajānāti, yathā ca anuppannassa saṃyojanassa uppādo hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca uppannassa saṃyojanassa pahānaṃ hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca pahīnassa saṃyojanassa āyatim anuppādo hoti tañca pajānāti.

abandoning of the arisen fetter; and he understands how there is the future non-arising of the abandoned fetter.

He understands the ear, and he understands sounds, and what the fetter is that arises dependent on both, that he understands too. And he understands how there is the arising of an unarisen fetter; and he understands how there is the abandoning of the arisen fetter; and he understands how there is the future non-arising of the abandoned fetter.

He understands the nose, and he understands odours, and what the fetter is that arises dependent on both, that he understands too. And he understands how there is the arising of an unarisen fetter; and he understands how there is the abandoning of the arisen fetter; and he understands how there is the future non-arising of the abandoned fetter.

He understands the tongue, and he understands flavours, and what the fetter is that arises dependent on both, that he understands too. And he understands how there is the arising of an unarisen fetter; and he understands how there is the abandoning of the arisen fetter; and he understands how there is the future non-arising of the abandoned fetter.

He understands the body, and he understands tangibles, and what the fetter is that arises dependent on both, that he understands too. And he understands how there is the arising of an unarisen fetter; and he understands how there is the abandoning of the arisen fetter; and he understands how there is the future non-arising of the abandoned fetter.

He understands the mind, and he understands things, and what the fetter is that arises dependent on both, that he understands too. And he understands how there is the arising of an unarisen fetter; and he understands how there is the abandoning of the arisen fetter; and he understands how there is the future non-arising of the abandoned fetter.

Iti ajjhataṃ vā dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati, bahiddhā vā dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati, ajjhatabhiddhā vā dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati. Samudayadhammānupassī vā dhammesu viharati, vayadhammānupassī vā dhammesu viharati, samudaya-vayadhammānupassī vā dhammesu viharati. ‘Atthi dhammā’ti vā panassa sati paccupaṭṭhitā hoti yāvadeva ñāṇamattāya paṭissati-mattāya, anissito ca viharati, na ca kiñci loke upādiyati. Evampi kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati chasu ajjhattikabāhiresu āyatanesu.

Āyatanapabbāṃ niṭṭhitāṃ.

Bojjhaṅgapabbāṃ

Puna caparaṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati sattasu bojjhaṅgesu. Kathaṇca pana, bhikkhave, bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati sattasu bojjhaṅgesu?

Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu santaṃ vā ajjhataṃ satisambojjhaṅgaṃ ‘atthi me ajjhataṃ satisambojjhaṅgo’ti pajānāti, asantaṃ vā ajjhataṃ satisambojjhaṅgaṃ ‘natthi me ajjhataṃ satisambojjhaṅgo’ti pajānāti, yathā ca anuppannassa satisambojjhaṅgassa uppādo hoti taṇca pajānāti, yathā ca uppannassa satisambojjhaṅgassa bhāvanāya pāripūrī hoti taṇca pajānāti.

Santaṃ vā ajjhataṃ dhammavicayasambojjhaṅgaṃ ‘atthi me ajjhataṃ dhammavicayasambojjhaṅgo’ti pajānāti, asantaṃ vā ajjhataṃ dhammavicayasambojjhaṅgaṃ ‘natthi me ajjhataṃ dhammavicayasambojjhaṅgo’ti pajānāti, yathā ca anuppannassa dhammavicayasambojjhaṅgassa uppādo hoti taṇca pajānāti, yathā ca uppannassa dhammavicayasambojjhaṅgassa bhāvanāya pāripūrī hoti taṇca pajānāti.

In this way he abides internally with things thing-contemplating, or he abides externally with things thing-contemplating, or he abides internally&externally with things thing-contemplating. Or else contemplating as things of origin he abides with things, or contemplating as things of passing-away he abides with things, or contemplating as things of origin&passing-away he abides with things. Or else 'there is things' mindfulness is present for him, just for the right measure of knowing and against-the-grain mindfulness. And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with things thing-contemplating in terms of the six internal&external domains.

The awakening factors

Again a bhikkhu abides with things thing-contemplating in terms of the seven awakening factors. And how does a bhikkhu abide with things thing-contemplating in terms of the seven awakening factors?

Here, the mindfulness awakening factor being internally present, a bhikkhu understands: 'The mindfulness awakening factor is internally present for me'; or the mindfulness awakening factor not being internally present, he understands: 'The mindfulness awakening factor is not internally present for me'; and how there is the arising of the unarisen mindfulness awakening factor, and how for the arisen mindfulness awakening factor there is fulfilment by development, that he also understands.

Or the thing-investigation awakening factor being internally present, a bhikkhu understands: 'The thing-investigation awakening factor is internally present for me'; or the thing-investigation awakening factor not being internally present, he understands: 'The thing-investigation awakening factor is not internally present for me'; and how there is the arising of the unarisen thing-investigation awakening factor, and how for the arisen thing-investigation awakening factor there is fulfilment by development, that he also understands.

Santaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ vīriyasambojjhaṅgaṃ ‘atthi me ajjhattaṃ vīriyasambojjhaṅgo’ti pajānāti, asantaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ vīriyasambojjhaṅgaṃ ‘natthi me ajjhattaṃ vīriyasambojjhaṅgo’ti pajānāti, yathā ca anuppannassa vīriyasambojjhaṅgassa uppādo hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca uppannassa vīriyasambojjhaṅgassa bhāvanāya pāripūrī hoti tañca pajānāti.

Santaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ pītisambojjhaṅgaṃ ‘atthi me ajjhattaṃ pītisambojjhaṅgo’ti pajānāti, asantaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ pītisambojjhaṅgaṃ ‘natthi me ajjhattaṃ pītisambojjhaṅgo’ti pajānāti, yathā ca anuppannassa pītisambojjhaṅgassa uppādo hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca uppannassa pītisambojjhaṅgassa bhāvanāya pāripūrī hoti tañca pajānāti.

Santaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ passaddhisambojjhaṅgaṃ ‘atthi me ajjhattaṃ passaddhisambojjhaṅgo’ti pajānāti, asantaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ passaddhisambojjhaṅgaṃ ‘natthi me ajjhattaṃ passaddhisambojjhaṅgo’ti pajānāti, yathā ca anuppannassa passaddhisambojjhaṅgassa uppādo hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca uppannassa passaddhisambojjhaṅgassa bhāvanāya pāripūrī hoti tañca pajānāti.

Santaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ samādhisambojjhaṅgaṃ ‘atthi me ajjhattaṃ samādhisambojjhaṅgo’ti pajānāti, asantaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ samādhisambojjhaṅgaṃ ‘natthi me ajjhattaṃ samādhisambojjhaṅgo’ti pajānāti, yathā ca anuppannassa samādhisambojjhaṅgassa uppādo hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca uppannassa samādhisambojjhaṅgassa bhāvanāya pāripūrī hoti tañca pajānāti.

Or the energy awakening factor being internally present, a bhikkhu understands: 'The energy awakening factor is internally present for me'; or the energy awakening factor not being internally present, he understands: 'The energy awakening factor is not internally present for me'; and how there is the arising of the unarisen energy awakening factor, and how for the arisen energy awakening factor there is fulfilment by development, that he also understands.

Or the rapture awakening factor being internally present, a bhikkhu understands: 'The rapture awakening factor is internally present for me'; or the rapture awakening factor not being internally present, he understands: 'The rapture awakening factor is not internally present for me'; and how there is the arising of the unarisen rapture awakening factor, and how for the arisen rapture awakening factor there is fulfilment by development, that he also understands.

Or the tranquillity awakening factor being internally present, a bhikkhu understands: 'The tranquillity awakening factor is internally present for me'; or the tranquillity awakening factor not being internally present, he understands: 'The tranquillity awakening factor is not internally present for me'; and how there is the arising of the unarisen tranquillity awakening factor, and how for the arisen tranquillity awakening factor there is fulfilment by development, that he also understands.

Or the concentration awakening factor being internally present, a bhikkhu understands: 'The concentration awakening factor is internally present for me'; or the concentration awakening factor not being internally present, he understands: 'The concentration awakening factor is not internally present for me'; and how there is the arising of the unarisen concentration awakening factor, and how for the arisen concentration awakening factor there is fulfilment by development, that he also understands.

Santaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ upekkhāsambojjhaṅgaṃ ‘atthi me ajjhattaṃ upekkhāsambojjhaṅgo’ti pajānāti, asantaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ upekkhāsambojjhaṅgaṃ ‘natthi me ajjhattaṃ upekkhāsambojjhaṅgo’ti pajānāti, yathā ca anuppannassa upekkhāsambojjhaṅgassa uppādo hoti tañca pajānāti, yathā ca uppannassa upekkhāsambojjhaṅgassa bhāvanāya pāripūri hoti tañca pajānāti.

Iti ajjhattaṃ vā dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati, bahiddhā vā dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati, ajjhatabhiddhā vā dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati. Samudayadhammānupassī vā dhammesu viharati, vayadhammānupassī vā dhammesu viharati, samudaya-vayadhammānupassī vā dhammesu viharati. ‘Atthi dhammā’ti vā panassa sati paccupaṭṭhitā hoti yāvadeva ñāṇamattāya paṭissati-mattāya, anissito ca viharati, na ca kiñci loke upādiyati. Evampi kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati sattasu bojjhaṅgesu.

Bojjhaṅgapabbaṃ niṭṭhitam.

Saccapabbaṃ

Puna caparaṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati catūsu ariyasaccesu. Kathañca pana, bhikkhave, bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati catūsu ariyasaccesu?

Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu ‘idaṃ dukkhaṃ’ti yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti, ‘ayaṃ dukkhasamudayo’ti yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti, ‘ayaṃ dukkhanirodho’ti yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti, ‘ayaṃ dukkhanirodhagāmini paṭipadā’ti yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti.

Paṭhamabhāṇavāro niṭṭhito.

Or the equanimity awakening factor being internally present, a bhikkhu understands: ‘The equanimity awakening factor is internally present for me’; or the equanimity awakening factor not being internally present, he understands: ‘The equanimity awakening factor is not internally present for me’; and how there is the arising of the unarisen equanimity awakening factor, and how for the arisen equanimity awakening factor there is fulfilment by development, that he also understands.

In this way he abides internally with things thing-contemplating, or he abides externally with things thing-contemplating, or he abides internally&externally with things thing-contemplating. Or else contemplating as things of origin he abides with things, or contemplating as things of passing-away he abides with things, or contemplating as things of origin&passing-away he abides with things. Or else ‘there is things’ mindfulness is present for him, just for the right measure of knowing and against-the-grain mindfulness. And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with things thing-contemplating in terms of the seven awakening factors.

The truths

Again a bhikkhu abides with things thing-contemplating in terms of the four noble truths. And how does a bhikkhu abide with things thing-contemplating in terms of the four noble truths?

Here a bhikkhu understands according to reality: ‘This is suffering’; he understands according to reality: ‘This is the origin of suffering’; he understands according to reality: ‘This is the cessation of suffering’; he understands according to reality: ‘This is the practice leading to the cessation of suffering.’

End of the first recitation section^{tt}.

tt The first section is identical with the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta of the Majjhima Nikāya (M10). The following analysis of the four noble truths is only found in the longer version of our sutta in the Dīgha Nikāya.

Dukkhasaccaniddeso

Katamañca, bhikkhave, dukkhaṃ ariyasaccaṃ? Jātipi dukkhā, jarāpi dukkhā, maraṇampi dukkhaṃ, sokaparidevadukkhado-manassupāyāsāpi dukkhā, appiyehi sampayogopi dukkho, piyehi vip-payogopi dukkho, yampicchaṃ na labhati tampi dukkhaṃ, saṅkhitte-na pañcupādānakkhandhā dukkhā.

Katamā ca, bhikkhave, jāti? Yā tesaṃ tesaṃ sattānaṃ tamhi tamhi sattanikāye jāti sañjāti okkanti abhinibbatti khandhānaṃ pātubhāvo āyatanānaṃ paṭilābho, ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, jāti.

Katamā ca, bhikkhave, jarā? Yā tesaṃ tesaṃ sattānaṃ tamhi tamhi sattanikāye jarā jiraṇatā khaṇḍiccaṃ pāliccaṃ valittacatā āyuno saṃhāni indriyānaṃ paripāko, ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, jarā.

Katamañca, bhikkhave, maraṇaṃ? Yaṃ tesaṃ tesaṃ sattānaṃ tamhā tamhā sattanikāyā cuti cavanatā bhedo antaradhānaṃ maccu maraṇaṃ kālakiriya khandhānaṃ bhedo kaḷavarassa nikkhepo jīvit-indriyassupacchedo, idaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, maraṇaṃ.

Katamo ca, bhikkhave, soko? Yo kho, bhikkhave, aññataraññatarena byasanena samannāgatassa aññataraññatarena dukkhadhammena phuṭṭhassa soko socanā socitattaṃ antosoko antoparisoko, ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, soko.

Katamo ca, bhikkhave, paridevo? Yo kho, bhikkhave, aññataraññatarena byasanena samannāgatassa aññataraññatarena dukkhadhammena phuṭṭhassa ādevo paridevo ādevanā paridevanā ādevitattaṃ paridevitattaṃ, ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, paridevo.

Analysis of the Truth of Suffering

And what, bhikkhus, is the noble truth of suffering? Coming-into-the-world is suffering; ageing is suffering; dying is suffering; sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair are suffering; association with the unloved is suffering, separation from the loved is suffering, not getting what one wants is suffering; taken together, the five taking-up-heaps are suffering.

And what, bhikkhus, is coming-into-the-world? The coming-into-the-world of these or those beings in this or that group of beings, their coming-here, entry, coming-forth, appearance of the heaps, receiving of the domains – this is called coming-into-the-world.

And what, bhikkhus, is ageing? The ageing of these or those beings in this or that group of beings, their frailty, brokenness, greying, wrinkling of the skin, decline of life-force, deterioration of faculties – this is called ageing.

And what, bhikkhus, is dying? The departure of these or those beings from this or that group of beings, their passing away, breaking up, disappearance, death, dying, completion of time, dissolution of the heaps, laying down of the body, cutting off of life faculty – this is called dying.

And what, bhikkhus, is sorrow? The sorrow, sorrowing, sadness, inner sorrow, inner sorriness, of one who has encountered one or another misfortune or is touched by one or another suffering-thing – this is called sorrow.

And what, bhikkhus, is lamentation? The wail and lamentation, the wailing and lamenting, the wailing and lamenting situation, of one who has encountered one or another misfortune or is touched by one or another suffering-thing – this is called lamentation.

Katamañca, bhikkhave, dukkhaṃ? Yaṃ kho, bhikkhave, kāyikaṃ dukkhaṃ kāyikaṃ asātaṃ kāyasamphassajaṃ dukkhaṃ asātaṃ vedayitaṃ, idaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, dukkhaṃ.

Katamañca, bhikkhave, domanassaṃ? Yaṃ kho, bhikkhave, cetasi-kaṃ dukkhaṃ cetasi-kaṃ asātaṃ manosamphassajaṃ dukkhaṃ asātaṃ vedayitaṃ, idaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, domanassaṃ.

Katamo ca, bhikkhave, upāyāso? Yo kho, bhikkhave, aññataraññata-rena byasanena samannāgatassa aññataraññatarena dukkhadhamme-na phuṭṭhassa āyāso upāyāso āyāsittatṭaṃ upāyāsittatṭaṃ, ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, upāyāso.

Katamo ca, bhikkhave, appiyehi sampayogo dukkho? Idha yassa te honti anitṭhā akantā amanāpā rūpā saddā gandhā rasā phoṭṭhabbā dhammā, ye vā panassa te honti anattakāmā ahitakāmā aphāsu-kakāmā ayogakkhemakāmā, yā tehi saddhiṃ saṅgati samāgamo samodhānaṃ missibhāvo, ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, appiyehi sam-payogo dukkho.

Katamo ca, bhikkhave, piyehi vippayogo dukkho? Idha yassa te honti itṭhā kantā manāpā rūpā saddā gandhā rasā phoṭṭhabbā dhammā, ye vā panassa te honti atthakāmā hitakāmā phāsukakāmā yogakkhe-makāmā mātā vā pitā vā bhātā vā bhaginī vā mittā vā amaccā vā ñātisālohitā vā, yā tehi saddhiṃ asaṅgati asamāgamo asamodhānaṃ amissibhāvo, ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, piyehi vippayogo dukkho.

And what, bhikkhus, is pain? Bodily pain, bodily discomfort, painful, uncomfortable feeling produced by bodily contact – this is called pain.

And what, bhikkhus, is grief? Mental pain, mental discomfort, painful, uncomfortable feeling produced by mental contact – this is called grief.

And what, bhikkhus, is despair? The despondency and despair, the demoralisation and desperation, of one who has encountered one or another misfortune or is touched by one or another suffering-thing – this is called despair.

And what, bhikkhus, is the suffering of association with the unloved? Here, what there are of forms, sounds, odours, flavours, tangibles, things that are unwelcome, undesirable, unenjoyable; or what there are of those who wish for one's misery, wish for one's harm, wish for one's discomfort, who wish one no safety from bondage – the connection, the meeting with those, the encounter, the company of those – this is called the suffering of association with the unloved.

And what, bhikkhus, is the suffering of separation from the loved? Here, what there are of forms, sounds, odours, flavours, tangibles, things that are welcome, desirable, enjoyable; or what there are of those who wish for one's benefit, wish for one's well-being, wish for one's comfort, who wish one safety from bondage – like mother, father, brother, sister, friends, fellows, relatives – the disconnection, the not meeting with those, the non-encounter, the non-company of those – this is called the suffering of separation from the loved.

Katamañca, bhikkhave, yampicchaṃ na labhati tampi dukkhaṃ? Jātidhammānaṃ, bhikkhave, sattānaṃ evaṃ icchā uppajjati – ‘aho vata mayaṃ na jātidhammā assāma, na ca vata no jāti āgaccheyyā’ti. Na kho panetaṃ icchāya pattabbaṃ, idampi yampicchaṃ na labhati tampi dukkhaṃ.

Jarādharmānaṃ, bhikkhave, sattānaṃ evaṃ icchā uppajjati – ‘aho vata mayaṃ na jarādharmā assāma, na ca vata no jarā āgaccheyyā’ti. Na kho panetaṃ icchāya pattabbaṃ, idampi yampicchaṃ na labhati tampi dukkhaṃ.

Byādhidhammānaṃ, bhikkhave, sattānaṃ evaṃ icchā uppajjati ‘aho vata mayaṃ na byādhidhammā assāma, na ca vata no byādhi āgaccheyyā’ti. Na kho panetaṃ icchāya pattabbaṃ, idampi yampicchaṃ na labhati tampi dukkhaṃ.

Maraṇadhammānaṃ, bhikkhave, sattānaṃ evaṃ icchā uppajjati ‘aho vata mayaṃ na maraṇadhammā assāma, na ca vata no maraṇaṃ āgaccheyyā’ti. Na kho panetaṃ icchāya pattabbaṃ, idampi yampicchaṃ na labhati tampi dukkhaṃ.

Sokaparidevadukkhadomanassupāyāsadhammānaṃ, bhikkhave, sattānaṃ evaṃ icchā uppajjati ‘aho vata mayaṃ na sokapari-devadukkhadomanassupāyāsadhammā assāma, na ca vata no soka-paridevadukkhadomanassupāyāsadhammā āgaccheyyun’ti. Na kho panetaṃ icchāya pattabbaṃ, idampi yampicchaṃ na labhati tampi dukkhaṃ.

Katame ca, bhikkhave, saṅkhittena pañcupādānakkhandhā dukkhā? Seyyathidaṃ – rūpupādānakkhandho, vedanupādānakkhandho, saññupādānakkhandho, saṅkhārupādānakkhandho, viññāṇupādānakkhandho. Ime vuccanti, bhikkhave, saṅkhittena pañcupādānakkhandhā dukkhā. Idaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, dukkhaṃ ariyasaccaṃ.

And what, bhikkhus, is the suffering of not getting what one wants? For beings who are things of coming-into-the-world the wanting arises thus: 'Oh, may we not be things of coming-into-the-world, and may coming-into-the-world not approach us.' But this of course is not to be achieved by wanting. This is the suffering of not getting what one wants.

For beings who are things of ageing the wanting arises thus: 'Oh, may we not be things of ageing, and may ageing not approach us.' But this of course is not to be achieved by wanting. This is the suffering of not getting what one wants.

For beings who are things of illness the wanting arises thus: 'Oh, may we not be things of illness, and may illness not approach us.' But this of course is not to be achieved by wanting. This is the suffering of not getting what one wants.

For beings who are things of dying the wanting arises thus: 'Oh, may we not be things of dying, and may dying not approach us.' But this of course is not to be achieved by wanting. This is the suffering of not getting what one wants.

For beings who are things of sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair the wanting arises thus: 'Oh, may we not be things of sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair, and may things of sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair not approach us.' But this of course is not to be achieved by wanting. This is the suffering of not getting what one wants.

And what, bhikkhus, are, taken together, the five taking-up-heaps, that are suffering? They are: the form taking-up-heap, the feeling taking-up-heap, the perception taking-up-heap, the determinations taking-up-heap, the consciousness taking-up-heap. These are called, taken together, the five taking-up-heaps, that are suffering. This is called the noble truth of suffering.

Samudayasaccaniddeso

Katamañca, bhikkhave, dukkhasamudayaṃ ariyasaccaṃ? Yāyaṃ taṇhā ponobbhavikā nandirāgasahagatā tatrataṭṭrābhinandinī, seyyathidaṃ – kāmataṇhā bhavataṇhā vibhavataṇhā.

Sā kho panesā, bhikkhave, taṇhā kattha uppajjamānā uppajjati, kattha nivisamānā nivisati? Yaṃ loke piyarūpaṃ sātārūpaṃ, etthesā taṇhā uppajjamānā uppajjati, ettha nivisamānā nivisati.

Kiñca loke piyarūpaṃ sātārūpaṃ? Cakkhu loke piyarūpaṃ sātārūpaṃ, etthesā taṇhā uppajjamānā uppajjati, ettha nivisamānā nivisati. Sotaṃ loke ... pe ... ghānaṃ loke ... jivhā loke ... kāyo loke ... mano loke piyarūpaṃ sātārūpaṃ, etthesā taṇhā uppajjamānā uppajjati, ettha nivisamānā nivisati.

Rūpā loke ... saddā loke ... gandhā loke ... rasā loke ... phoṭṭhabbā loke ... dhammā loke piyarūpaṃ sātārūpaṃ, etthesā taṇhā uppajjamānā uppajjati, ettha nivisamānā nivisati.

Cakkhuviññāṇaṃ loke ... sotaviññāṇaṃ loke ... ghānaviññāṇaṃ loke ... jivhāviññāṇaṃ loke ... kāyaviññāṇaṃ loke ... manoviññāṇaṃ loke piyarūpaṃ sātārūpaṃ, etthesā taṇhā uppajjamānā uppajjati, ettha nivisamānā nivisati.

Cakkhusamphasso loke ... sotasamphasso loke ... ghānasamphasso loke ... jivhāsamphasso loke ... kāyasamphasso loke ... manosamphasso loke piyarūpaṃ sātārūpaṃ, etthesā taṇhā uppajjamānā uppajjati, ettha nivisamānā nivisati.

Cakkhusamphassajā vedanā loke ... sotasamphassajā vedanā loke ... ghānasamphassajā vedanā loke ... jivhāsamphassajā vedanā loke ... kāyasamphassajā vedanā loke ... manosamphassajā vedanā loke piyarūpaṃ sātārūpaṃ, etthesā taṇhā uppajjamānā uppajjati, ettha nivisamānā nivisati.

Rūpasāññā loke ... saddasaññā loke ... gandhasaññā loke ... rasasaññā loke ... phoṭṭhabbasaññā loke ... dhammasaññā loke piyarūpaṃ sātārūpaṃ, etthesā taṇhā uppajjamānā uppajjati, ettha nivisamānā nivisati.

Analysis of the Truth of the Origin

And what, bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the origin of suffering? It is this craving that brings further being, accompanied by delectation&passion and delights here and there – namely, craving for wishing, craving for being, craving for potential being.

And this craving, where does it arise, where does it settle down? Whatever in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving arises, there it settles down.

What in the world is interesting and appealing? The eye in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving arises, there it settles down. The ear ... The nose ... The tongue ... The body ... The mind in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving arises, there it settles down.

Forms ... Sounds ... Odours ... Flavours ... Tangibles ... Things in the world are interesting and appealing, there this craving arises, there it settles down.

Eye-consciousness ... Ear-consciousness ... Nose-consciousness ... Tongue-consciousness ... Body-consciousness ... Mind-consciousness in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving arises, there it settles down.

Eye-contact ... Ear-contact ... Nose-contact ... Tongue-contact ... Body-contact ... Mind-contact in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving arises, there it settles down.

Feeling produced by eye-contact ... Feeling produced by ear-contact ... Feeling produced by nose-contact ... Feeling produced by tongue-contact ... Feeling produced by body-contact ... Feeling produced by mind-contact in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving arises, there it settles down.

Perception of forms ... Perception of sounds ... Perception of odours ... Perception of flavours ... Perception of tangibles ... Perception of things in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving arises, there it settles down.

Rūpasañcetanā loke ... saddasañcetanā loke ... gandhasañcetanā loke ... rasasañcetanā loke ... phoṭṭhabbasañcetanā loke ... dhammasañcetanā loke piyarūpaṃ sātārūpaṃ, etthesā taṇhā uppajjamānā uppajjati, ettha nivisaṃānā nivisati.

Rūpataṇhā loke ... saddataṇhā loke ... gandhataṇhā loke ... rasataṇhā loke ... phoṭṭhabbataṇhā loke ... dhammataṇhā loke piyarūpaṃ sātārūpaṃ, etthesā taṇhā uppajjamānā uppajjati, ettha nivisaṃānā nivisati.

Rūpavitakko loke ... saddavitakko loke ... gandhavitakko loke ... rasavitakko loke ... phoṭṭhabbavitakko loke ... dhammavitakko loke piyarūpaṃ sātārūpaṃ, etthesā taṇhā uppajjamānā uppajjati, ettha nivisaṃānā nivisati.

Rūpavicāro loke ... saddavicāro loke ... gandhavicāro loke ... rasavicāro loke ... phoṭṭhabbavicāro loke ... dhammavicāro loke piyarūpaṃ sātārūpaṃ, etthesā taṇhā uppajjamānā uppajjati, ettha nivisaṃānā nivisati.

Idaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, dukkhasamudayaṃ ariyasaccaṃ.

Intention of forms ... Intention of sounds ... Intention of odours ...
Intention of flavours ... Intention of tangibles ... Intention of things in
the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving arises, there
it settles down.

Craving for forms ... Craving for sounds ... Craving for odours ...
Craving for flavours ... Craving for tangibles ... Craving for things in
the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving arises, there
it settles down.

Thought of forms ... Thought of sounds ... Thought of odours ...
Thought of flavours ... Thought of tangibles ... Thought of things in
the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving arises, there
it settles down.

Sustained thought of forms ... Sustained thought of sounds ...
Sustained thought of odours ... Sustained thought of flavours ...
Sustained thought of tangibles ... Sustained thought of things in the
world is interesting and appealing, there this craving arises, there it
settles down.

This is called the noble truth of the origin of suffering.

Nirodhasaccaniddeso

Katamañca, bhikkhave, dukkhanirodham ariyasaccam? Yo tassāyeva taṇhāya asesavirāgaṇirodho cāgo paṭinissaggo mutti anālayo.

Sā kho panesā, bhikkhave, taṇhā kattha pahīyamānā pahīyati, kattha nirujjhamānā nirujjhati? Yaṁ loke piyarūpaṁ sātārūpaṁ, etthesā taṇhā pahīyamānā pahīyati, ettha nirujjhamānā nirujjhati.

Kiñca loke piyarūpaṁ sātārūpaṁ? Cakkhu loke piyarūpaṁ sātārūpaṁ, etthesā taṇhā pahīyamānā pahīyati, ettha nirujjhamānā nirujjhati. sotam loke ... pe ... ghānaṁ loke ... jivhā loke ... kāyo loke ... mano loke piyarūpaṁ sātārūpaṁ, etthesā taṇhā pahīyamānā pahīyati, ettha nirujjhamānā nirujjhati.

Rūpā loke ... saddā loke ... gandhā loke ... rasā loke ... phoṭṭhabbā loke ... dhammā loke piyarūpaṁ sātārūpaṁ, etthesā taṇhā pahīyamānā pahīyati, ettha nirujjhamānā nirujjhati.

Cakkhuviññānaṁ loke ... sotaviññānaṁ loke ... ghānaviññānaṁ loke ... jivhāviññānaṁ loke ... kāyaviññānaṁ loke ... manoviññānaṁ loke piyarūpaṁ sātārūpaṁ, etthesā taṇhā pahīyamānā pahīyati, ettha nirujjhamānā nirujjhati.

Cakkhusamphasso loke ... sotasamphasso loke ... ghānasamphasso loke ... jivhāsamphasso loke ... kāyasamphasso loke ... manosamphasso loke piyarūpaṁ sātārūpaṁ, etthesā taṇhā pahīyamānā pahīyati, ettha nirujjhamānā nirujjhati.

Cakkhusamphassajā vedanā loke ... sotasamphassajā vedanā loke ... ghānasamphassajā vedanā loke ... jivhāsamphassajā vedanā loke ... kāyasamphassajā vedanā loke ... manosamphassajā vedanā loke piyarūpaṁ sātārūpaṁ, etthesā taṇhā pahīyamānā pahīyati, ettha nirujjhamānā nirujjhati.

Rūpasaññā loke ... saddasaññā loke ... gandhasaññā loke ... rasasaññā loke ... phoṭṭhabbasaññā loke ... dhammasaññā loke piyarūpaṁ sātārūpaṁ, etthesā taṇhā pahīyamānā pahīyati, ettha nirujjhamānā nirujjhati.

Analysis of the Truth of Cessation

And what, bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the cessation of suffering? It is the remainderless cessation-through-dispassion, the giving up, letting go of this very craving, liberation from and non-attachment to it.

And this craving, where is it abandoned, where does it cease? Whatever in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving is abandoned, there it ceases.

What in the world is interesting and appealing? The eye in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving is abandoned, there it ceases. The ear ... The nose ... The tongue ... The body ... The mind in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving is abandoned, there it ceases.

Forms ... Sounds ... Odours ... Flavours ... Tangibles ... Things in the world are interesting and appealing, there this craving is abandoned, there it ceases.

Eye-consciousness ... Ear-consciousness ... Nose-consciousness ... Tongue-consciousness ... Body-consciousness ... Mind-consciousness in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving is abandoned, there it ceases.

Eye-contact ... Ear-contact ... Nose-contact ... Tongue-contact ... Body-contact ... Mind-contact in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving is abandoned, there it ceases.

Feeling produced by eye-contact ... Feeling produced by ear-contact ... Feeling produced by nose-contact ... Feeling produced by tongue-contact ... Feeling produced by body-contact ... Feeling produced by mind-contact in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving is abandoned, there it ceases.

Perception of forms ... Perception of sounds ... Perception of odours ... Perception of flavours ... Perception of tangibles ... Perception of things in the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving is abandoned, there it ceases.

Rūpasañcetanā loke ... saddasañcetanā loke ... gandhasañcetanā loke ... rasasañcetanā loke ... phoṭṭhabbasañcetanā loke ... dhammasañcetanā loke piyarūpaṃ sātārūpaṃ, etthesā taṇhā pahīyamānā pahīyati, ettha nirujjhamānā nirujjhati.

Rūpataṇhā loke ... saddataṇhā loke ... gandhataṇhā loke ... rasataṇhā loke ... phoṭṭhabbataṇhā loke ... dhammataṇhā loke piyarūpaṃ sātārūpaṃ, etthesā taṇhā pahīyamānā pahīyati, ettha nirujjhamānā nirujjhati.

Rūpavitakko loke ... saddavitakko loke ... gandhavitakko loke ... rasavitakko loke ... phoṭṭhabbavitakko loke ... dhammavitakko loke piyarūpaṃ sātārūpaṃ, etthesā taṇhā pahīyamānā pahīyati, ettha nirujjhamānā nirujjhati.

Rūpavicāro loke ... saddavicāro loke ... gandhavicāro loke ... rasavicāro loke ... phoṭṭhabbavicāro loke ... dhammavicāro loke piyarūpaṃ sātārūpaṃ, etthesā taṇhā pahīyamānā pahīyati, ettha nirujjhamānā nirujjhati.

Idaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, dukkhanirodhaṃ ariyasaccaṃ.

Intention of forms ... Intention of sounds ... Intention of odours ...
Intention of flavours ... Intention of tangibles ... Intention of things in
the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving is abandoned,
there it ceases.

Craving for forms ... Craving for sounds ... Craving for odours ...
Craving for flavours ... Craving for tangibles ... Craving for things in
the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving is abandoned,
there it ceases.

Thought of forms ... Thought of sounds ... Thought of odours ...
Thought of flavours ... Thought of tangibles ... Thought of things in
the world is interesting and appealing, there this craving is abandoned,
there it ceases.

Sustained thought of forms ... Sustained thought of sounds ...
Sustained thought of odours ... Sustained thought of flavours ...
Sustained thought of tangibles ... Sustained thought of things in the
world is interesting and appealing, there this craving is abandoned,
there it ceases.

This is called the noble truth of the cessation of suffering.

Maggasaccaniddeso

Katamañca, bhikkhave, dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā ariya-saccaṃ? Ayameva ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo seyyathidaṃ – sammādiṭṭhi sammāsaṅkappo sammāvācā sammākammanto sammā-ājīvo sammāvāyāmo sammāsati sammāsamādhī.

Katamā ca, bhikkhave, sammādiṭṭhi? Yaṃ kho, bhikkhave, dukkhe ñāṇaṃ, dukkhasamudaye ñāṇaṃ, dukkhanirodhe ñāṇaṃ, dukkhanirodhagāminiyā paṭipadāya ñāṇaṃ, ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, sammādiṭṭhi.

Katamo ca, bhikkhave, sammāsaṅkappo? Nekkhammasaṅkappo abyāpādasāṅkappo avihimsāsaṅkappo, ayaṃ vuccati bhikkhave, sammāsaṅkappo.

Katamā ca, bhikkhave, sammāvācā? Musāvādā veramaṇī pisuṇāya vācāya veramaṇī pharusāya vācāya veramaṇī samphappalāpā veramaṇī, ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, sammāvācā.

Katamo ca, bhikkhave, sammākammanto? Pāṇātipātā veramaṇī adinnādānā veramaṇī kāmesumicchācārā veramaṇī, ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, sammākammanto.

Katamo ca, bhikkhave, sammāājīvo? Idha, bhikkhave, ariyasāvako micchāājīvaṃ pahāya sammāājīvena jīvitaṃ kappeti, ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, sammāājīvo.

Analysis of the Truth of the Path

And what, bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the practice leading to the cessation of suffering? It is just this noble eightfold path; that is, right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.

And what, bhikkhus, is right view? Knowledge in regard to suffering, knowledge in regard to the origin of suffering, knowledge in regard to the cessation of suffering, knowledge in regard to the practice leading to the cessation of suffering – this is called right view.

And what, bhikkhus, is right resolve? Resolve for renunciation, resolve for non-ill will, and resolve for harmlessness – this is called right resolve.

And what, bhikkhus, is right speech? Abstaining from false speech, abstaining from harmful speech, abstaining from harsh speech, abstaining from idle chatter – this is called right speech.

And what, bhikkhus, is right action? Abstaining from killing living beings, abstaining from taking what is not given, and abstaining from misconduct in sensual pleasures (wishings) – this is called right action.

And what, bhikkhus, is right livelihood? Here a noble-disciple, having abandoned wrong livelihood, leads his life with right livelihood – this is called right livelihood.

Katamo ca, bhikkhave, sammāvāyāmo? Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu anuppannānaṃ pāpakānaṃ akusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ anuppādāya chandaṃ janeti vāyamati vīriyaṃ ārabhati cittaṃ paggaṇhāti padahati; uppannānaṃ pāpakānaṃ akusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ pahānāya chandaṃ janeti vāyamati vīriyaṃ ārabhati cittaṃ paggaṇhāti padahati; anuppannānaṃ kusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ uppādāya chandaṃ janeti vāyamati vīriyaṃ ārabhati cittaṃ paggaṇhāti padahati; uppannānaṃ kusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ tṭhitiyā asammosāya bhiyyo-bhāvāya vepullāya bhāvanāya pāripūriyā chandaṃ janeti vāyamati vīriyaṃ ārabhati cittaṃ paggaṇhāti padahati. Ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, sammāvāyāmo.

Katamā ca, bhikkhave, sammāsati? Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ; vedanāsu vedanānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ; citte cittānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ; dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ. Ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, sammāsati.

Katamo ca, bhikkhave, sammāsamādhi? Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu vivicceva kāmehi vivicca akusalehi dhammehi savitakkaṃ savicāraṃ vivekajaṃ pītisukhaṃ paṭhamam jhānaṃ upasampajja viharati. Vitakkavicārānaṃ vūpasamā ajjhataṃ sampasādanaṃ cetaso ekodibhāvaṃ avitakkaṃ avicāraṃ samādhijaṃ pītisukhaṃ dutiyaṃ jhānaṃ upasampajja viharati.

And what, bhikkhus, is right effort? Here a bhikkhu brings forth the will for the non-arising of unarisen evil unwholesome things, and he makes effort, arouses energy, exerts his heart, and strives. He brings forth the will for the abandoning of arisen evil unwholesome things, and he makes effort, arouses energy, exerts his heart, and strives. He brings forth the will for the arising of unarisen wholesome things, and he makes effort, arouses energy, exerts his heart, and strives. He brings forth the will for the continuance, non-disappearance, growth, increase, development, and fulfilment of arisen wholesome things, and he makes effort, arouses energy, exerts his heart, and strives. This is called right effort.

And what, bhikkhus, is right mindfulness? Here a bhikkhu abides with the body body-contemplating, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having removed greed&grief in regard to the world. He abides with feelings feeling-contemplating, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having removed greed&grief in regard to the world. He abides with the heart heart-contemplating, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having removed greed&grief in regard to the world. He abides with things thing-contemplating, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having removed greed&grief in regard to the world. This is called right mindfulness.

And what, bhikkhus, is right concentration? Here, quite secluded from wishings, secluded from unwholesome things, a bhikkhu abides having entered the first jhāna, which is accompanied by applied and sustained thought, with the pleasure of rapture produced by seclusion. With the stilling of applied and sustained thought, he abides having entered the second jhāna, which has internal assurance and unification of heart without applied and sustained thought, with the pleasure of rapture produced by concentration.

Pitīyā ca virāgā upekkhako ca viharati, sato ca sampajāno, sukhañca kāyena paṭisaṁvedeti, yaṁ taṁ ariyā ācikkhanti ‘upekkhako satimā sukhavihārī’ti tatiyaṁ jhānaṁ upasampajja viharati. Sukhassa ca pahānā dukkhassa ca pahānā pubbeva somanassadomanassānaṁ atthaṅgamā adukkhamasukhaṁ upekkhāsatipārisuddhiṁ catutthaṁ jhānaṁ upasampajja viharati. Ayaṁ vuccati, bhikkhave, sammā-samādhī.

Idaṁ vuccati, bhikkhave, dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā ariya-saccaṁ.

Iti ajjhattaṁ vā dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati, bahiddhā vā dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati, ajjhattabahiddhā vā dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati. Samudaya-dhammānupassī vā dhammesu viharati, vayadhammānupassī vā dhammesu viharati, samudaya-vayadhammānupassī vā dhammesu viharati. ‘Atthi dhammā’ti vā panassa sati paccupaṭṭhitā hoti yāvadeva ñāṇamattāya paṭissati-mattāya, anissito ca viharati, na ca kiñci loke upādiyati.

Evampi kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati catūsu ariyasacce.

Saccapabbaṁ niṭṭhitaṁ.

Dhammānupassanā niṭṭhitā.

With the fading away as well of rapture, he abides equanimous, mindful and fully aware. He experiences pleasure with the body, on account of which noble ones explain: ‘The equanimous mindful one has a pleasant abiding.’ He abides thus having entered the third jhāna. With the abandoning of pleasure and pain, and with the previous disappearance of joy&grief, he abides having entered the fourth jhāna, the neither-painful-nor-pleasant purification of mindfulness through equanimity. This is called right concentration.

This is called the noble truth of the practice leading to the cessation of suffering.

In this way he abides internally with things thing-contemplating, or he abides externally with things thing-contemplating, or he abides internally&externally with things thing-contemplating. Or else contemplating as things of origin he abides with things, or contemplating as things of passing-away he abides with things, or contemplating as things of origin&passing-away he abides with things. Or else ‘there is things’ mindfulness is present for him, just for the right measure of knowing and against-the-grain mindfulness. And he abides independent, and does not take up anything in the world. This, bhikkhus, is how a bhikkhu abides with things thing-contemplating in terms of the four noble truths.

Ekāyano ayaṃ maggo

Yo hi koci, bhikkhave, ime cattāro satipaṭṭhāne evaṃ bhāveyya sattavassāni, tassa dvinnāṃ phalānaṃ aññataraṃ phalaṃ pāṭikaṅkhaṃ: diṭṭheva dhamme aññā; sati vā upādisese anāgāmitā.

Tiṭṭhantu, bhikkhave, sattavassāni. Yo hi koci, bhikkhave, ime cattāro satipaṭṭhāne evaṃ bhāveyya cha vassāni ... pe ... pañca vassāni ... cattāri vassāni ... tīṇi vassāni ... dve vassāni ... ekaṃ vassaṃ ... Tiṭṭhatu, bhikkhave, ekaṃ vassaṃ. Yo hi koci, bhikkhave, ime cattāro satipaṭṭhāne evaṃ bhāveyya sattamāsāni, tassa dvinnāṃ phalānaṃ aññataraṃ phalaṃ pāṭikaṅkhaṃ: diṭṭheva dhamme aññā; sati vā upādisese anāgāmitā.

Tiṭṭhantu, bhikkhave, satta māsāni. Yo hi koci, bhikkhave, ime cattāro satipaṭṭhāne evaṃ bhāveyya cha māsāni ... pe ... pañca māsāni ... cattāri māsāni ... tīṇi māsāni ... dve māsāni ... ekaṃ māsam ... aḍḍhamāsaṃ ... Tiṭṭhatu, bhikkhave, aḍḍhamāso. Yo hi koci, bhikkhave, ime cattāro satipaṭṭhāne evaṃ bhāveyya sattāhaṃ, tassa dvinnāṃ phalānaṃ aññataraṃ phalaṃ pāṭikaṅkhaṃ: diṭṭheva dhamme aññā; sati vā upādisese anāgāmitāti.

Ekāyano ayaṃ, bhikkhave, maggo sattānaṃ visuddhiyā sokapari-devānaṃ samatikkamāya dukkhadomanassānaṃ atthaṅgamāya ñāyassa adhigamāya nibbānassa sacchikiriyāya yadidaṃ cattāro satipaṭṭhānā'ti. Iti yaṃ taṃ vuttaṃ, idametaṃ paṭicca vuttan'ti.

Idamavoca bhagavā. Attamanā te bhikkhū bhagavato bhāsitaṃ abhinanduntī.

Mahāsatiipaṭṭhānasuttaṃ niṭṭhitaṃ.

The Direct Path

Bhikkhus, if anyone should develop these four application-bases of mindfulness in this way for seven years, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either final knowledge here&now, or if there is still a remainder, non-return.

Let alone seven years, bhikkhus. If anyone should develop these four application-bases of mindfulness in this way for six years ... for five years ... for four years ... for three years ... for two years ... for one year ... Let alone one year, bhikkhus. If anyone should develop these four application-bases of mindfulness in this way for seven months, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either final knowledge here and now, or if there is still a remainder, non-return.

Let alone seven months, bhikkhus. If anyone should develop these four application-bases of mindfulness in this way for six months ... for five months ... for four months ... for three months ... for two months ... for one month ... for half a month ... Let alone half a month, bhikkhus. If anyone should develop these four application-bases of mindfulness in this way for seven days, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either final knowledge here and now, or if there is still a remainder, non-return.

‘Bhikkhus, this is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow&lamentation, for the disappearance of pain&grief, for the attainment of the appropriate method, for the realisation of Nibbāna – namely, the four application-bases of mindfulness.’ What has been said in this way, has been said exactly because of this.”

This is what the Blessed One said. Gratified the bhikkhus delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

PART 4

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POSTSCRIPT

Glossaries

The most important terms are listed in both glossaries. Details on etymology and meaning, as well as on alternative translations, are only given in the English – Pāli glossary. Further explanations can be found in the main text.

Information on etymology and the like was obtained from different grammars and dictionaries. For their conveyance no liability is assumed!

Some of that which follows could have also found a place in the main text. But since it occasionally gets a bit lost in details that are not of interest to every reader, and which may have disturbed the flow of thought, it has been banished to the appendix.

Besides, it always inspires confidence in an author if he has a few pages of incomprehensible calculations at the end of his book.²¹⁶

Ñāṇavīra Bhikkhu

English – Pāli

1.1 The Inside of the Looking Glass

bhikkhu – bhikkhu

A monk in the order of the Buddha.

direct (path) – ekāyana (magga)

Immediate, having one direction, one goal. In the past this term has been mistranslated as “the *only* way”. The *only* way to Nibbāna is the noble eightfold path. However, the path factor of right mindfulness is defined in this our sutta and in other discourses as satipaṭṭhāna. Satipaṭṭhāna can only be *developed* in the context of the eightfold path, that is, under the guidance of right view (cp. M117) and

culminating in right concentration. In some discourses (e.g. M 118) it is shown how satipaṭṭhāna fulfils the awakening factors (*bojjhaṅga*), and that these in turn fulfil liberation. In this regard the idea of the only way or path is *not entirely* wrong.

pain&grief – dukkhadomanassa

Dukkha, in its most general sense means *suffering*. In this special case it refers to bodily *pain* – the feeling of/in unpleasant physical sensations. *Domanassa*, on the other hand, is mental or emotional pain: *grief*, *despondence*, *sadness*. The latter translation would be nice as a counterpart to *somanassa*, gladness; but *gladness* and *sadness* are a bit weak in their meaning.

Nibbāna – nibbāna

Cooling, *extinction*, the going out of the fire of greed, hatred and delusion, the highest goal in the Buddha's dispensation, the unmade and undetermined (S 43). Nibbāna is the end of suffering, attainable already on this side of the grave. It is often misunderstood that suffering comes to an end because and when an arahant, after casting off his last body, is "dead for good". But an arahant does not die. He has reached the deathless! Nibbāna is the cessation of being (A 5.9), but not the annihilation of a "self" (M 22). To understand this, philosophical skills are not sufficient. One has to have successfully practised, for example, satipaṭṭhāna.

contemplating – anupassī

This word is not actually a present participle, but a nominalized adjective. The suffix *-ī* makes it a "noun of possession". Meaning that it does not refer to an activity that is presently being done, but rather to something that is owned or mastered. To express this in English is not especially elegant. A literal translation would be: "He abides with the body as someone who is capable of body-contemplating". Distinguishing the noun from a present participle ("body-contemplating") is not absolutely necessary in this case, because what one is capable of doing is also what one is doing right now.

It is, however, not always like this. There are cases in the discourses where what is mastered or owned becomes noticeable at times when it is actually *not* being done. (For example in the standard description of the eight domains [practices] of transcendence – *abhibhāyatanāni* [in D 16, D 33, D 34, M 77, A 8.65, A 10.29]. When the key term *rūpa-saññī* is translated as “one who has mastered perception of form”, this passage, which has been labelled cryptic, suddenly makes sense. It is only cryptic due the common translation as “*perceiving* form”.)

It is helpful to keep this in mind. Satipaṭṭhāna is not something one simply *does*. It has to be *cultivated and mastered*. That this is not a trifling matter will become increasingly clear while reading this book.

greed&grief – abhijjhādomanassa

Abhijjhā is greed or covetousness on a basic level, wanting something that we don’t have, or even that belongs to someone else. On this level, a wholesome application of will can serve as an effective antidote. More general than this form of wanting is *passion, lust, incentive*, the wanting of an experience that is connected with pleasant feeling – *rāga, lobha*. This is only overcome when the practice is almost done. The most general kind of wanting is *craving* for experience and being (or Dasein) in general – *taṇhā*. It even includes the wanting of unpleasant things and conditions identification with them. The destruction of this type of wanting comes with the end of the practice and is synonymous with the end of all suffering.

thing – dhamma

The reason why this translation always fits, even if it sometimes challenges reading habits, is explained in detail in the main text (especially in the chapter on *contemplation of things*).

Sutta – sutta

Discourse; literally: *thread*, i.e. the golden one.

Dhamma – dhamma

The teaching of the Buddha. In this context it remains untranslated as a new entry into the English language. In other contexts throughout this book *dhamma* is radically and consistently translated as “thing”. It would also be factually correct here because the teaching is the Buddha’s “thing”. He “did his own thing” – quite literally, because he got his thing rolling when he “set in motion the wheel of the Dhamma”. *Dhammavinaya* means “teaching&discipline” or “teaching&guidance”.

timeless – akālika

Or *non-temporal*; one of the attributes of the Dhamma. It means that the essence of the teaching is structural. It deals with the state of phenomena and their conditionality, and not with sequences or processes in time. Timeless does *not* mean: “always in fashion, always valid” or “immediately effective” or “at the wrong time”.

a sensing one – vediyamāna

A feeling one, an experiencing one. It is the present participle of the verb *vediyati*. The etymologically similar word *vedayamāna* (from *vedayati/vedeti*) has more or less the same meaning (it also means “a knowing one”), so that the translation “a sensing one” was primarily chosen to distinguish it from *vedayamāna*, but also to emphasise that experiencing is an activity. This becomes clear when it is seen in the light of the Buddha’s teaching.

to exist objectively/ to not really exist – atthi / n’atthi

There are two words in Pāli for “to be” that express different ontological aspects: *atthi* and *hoti*.

atthi

static

absolute

emphasis on the state

independent

hoti

dynamic

relative

emphasis on change

dependent

metaphysics – lokāyata

“World-extension”: This field of knowledge is listed in the suttas as being part of the standard description of a learned Brahmin.

Tathāgata – Tathāgata

That’s how the Buddha referred to himself, and remains untranslated. The word means the *One Thus Gone*. It could also mean the *One Thus Come*. There are extensive explanations of the meaning in the commentaries, but in the end no-one really knows, because the Tathāgata is as “deep and unfathomable as the ocean”.

drives – āsavā

This entry does not exist in the German version of this book because there is a perfect translation for *āsavā* that fits the meaning, application and etymology exactly, and does not require any explanation: *Triebe*. For some reason the English language does not have this word. Therefore it is difficult to translate *āsavā* (as a technical term) into English.

This difficulty is mentioned in the PTS dictionary, which forgoes any translation and tries to explain the term as “certain specified ideas which intoxicate, bemuddle and befuddle the mind”. But *āsavā* are not ideas and are not at all specified. They are the most general condition of our existence as ignorant, suffering beings. I find attempts like “cankers” or “taints” quite nondescript. They do not meet the requirements mentioned above, as “*Triebe*” does in German.

Let’s try to analyse the term: ā + √su, (“flow”). The prefix ā~ is quite versatile: it can indicate involvement, or the aim of an action (“towards”, “up to”); it can have a reflexive function, referring to the subject or agent of action (everyone knows *adinn’ā-dāna* – “giving to oneself [= taking] of what has not been given”); or it indicates close transitive relation to the object passively concerned. And it is an intensifier. *A very intense flowing up to and against oneself.*

Application: the drives are the condition for ignorance. Ignorance in turn is the condition for the drives. Thus the drives are active and at the same time passive “basic instincts”, something we “do” and

“suffer”. Here a couple of examples: the most general drive to exist (German: “Daseinstrieb”) and the more specific sex-drive (“Sexualtrieb”).

I feel that “drives” fits best. It comes as a noun and a verb (as in Pāli – *āsavati*, “to drive”, in the sense of *goad*ing, *impelling*). It has active and passive aspects: drive and drift, flow and float, outflow and influx. It is something we do to ourselves: because of the drives we drive ourselves, make ourselves drift along.

1.2 The Practice is a Hologram

throne posture – pallaṅka

A stable, but at the same time comfortable meditation posture: the full lotus posture, the half lotus, the semi-half lotus, the Burmese posture with both lower legs parallel, on a cushion or a bench with the legs folded backwards or, if necessary, on a chair.

mindfulness – sati

Remembering, making present, bringing to mind.

all around ready-to-use – parimukhaṃ

This literally means “around the face/around the mouth”, which led to the widespread idea that the breath should be observed at a particular place, namely the upper lip or the tip of the nose. But the word also appears in the Pāli canon in the context of other types of meditation (e.g. in D 2, M 27, S 7. 12, A 3. 64 etc.) that have nothing to do with the breath, for example radiating the four immeasurable or divine emotions (*brahmavihāra* – kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity) or practising *jhāna* in general. This translation is based on a little peek taken at the explanation in the commentary to our sutta.

experiencing – paṭisaṃvedī

Sensing (this word has already been used for *vediyamāna*); literally: “one who possesses (masters) the experiencing of something”. See

the discussion of *contemplating*: to *experience* the subtle states in meditation, one has to *first be able* to do so. The literal translation has been used elsewhere in this book in places where it seemed to make sense to do so in order to point out the meaning more clearly.

determination – saṅkhāra

Something that determines or conditions a *thing* – i.e. something *determining*. This term has been notoriously misinterpreted by scholasticism as something *determined*. But determinations are more than just conditions. That's why they are called "determinations" and not just "conditions". The full story is found in the main text.

uposatha – uposatha

The day of the full, new or half moon on which (some) Buddhist lay people observe the eight ethical precepts instead of the five that are usually kept (by some), listen to Dhamma talks and devote themselves to meditation.

noble-disciple – ariyasāvaka

Noble-follower, noble-hearer. This translation avoids the controversy as to whether *ariyasāvaka* is a *noble* disciple or a disciple of *the noble one(s)*. This is not evident from the compound word itself. There are no definitions found in the suttas. But arguments both for and against each interpretation are to be found.

Since he "pays attention to noble ones" (or "has regard for them", lit.: *dassāvī*, "one who is used to seeing"), we might think that he himself is not one of them. But actually, only a noble one can *see* a noble one, i.e. recognize him as such.

One might object and say that he only "regards" (*samanupassati*) it as such, "this is not mine ..." To do this one does not have to be a noble one. It is sufficient to be "well-versed" in the teaching. On the other hand, other suttas (e.g. M 140, quoted in chapter 2.1) tell us that this "should be *seen* as it really is with proper wisdom." But then again, in M 125 an utter beginner is called an *ariyasāvaka* ... This question remains an intriguing one!

full awareness – sampajañña

Literally: “together-forward-knowing”: comprehension of the context and knowing of the direction.

1.3 Entering Satipaṭṭhāna

internally&externally – ajjhatabhiddhā

Or: *own&alien, personal&otherwise, subjective&objective, here&there, belonging&excluded*. It is only *internally&externally* that applies independent of the mode of experience, i.e. it doesn't matter whether someone is at the beginning of the practice or has successfully completed it.

application-bases of mindfulness – satipaṭṭhānā

Ṭhāna (from the √*ṭhā*, “stand”) means “(place of) standing”, “possibility”, “foundation”, “principle”. The prefix *pa~* indicates a movement or change in a forward direction.

Alternatives: “*action* bases” (from earlier Dhamma talks of mine) emphasises activity, but says nothing about a direction. “Departure points” (Ven. Ñāṇatiloka) are too small. “Frames of *reference*” (Ven. Ṭhānissaro) point in the wrong direction: *Re*-ference means bringing *back*. “Work places” does not imply a *change* of place. “Foundations of cognizance” is nice in terms of the meaning, but is too interpretive. Or how about “nearby-holdings” (*sati + upaṭṭhāna*, Ñāṇatiloka; – the usual and literal meaning of *upaṭṭhāna* is “assistance” [*assistance*]), “applications”, “putting forward”, “starting points”, “setting out” (PTS dictionary) or “pillars” (Hecker)?

Let's leave it at *application-bases of mindfulness*.

body – kāya

Primary meaning: *group, collection, class, category, corporation*.

1.4 Development of Satipaṭṭhāna

thing of origin&passing-away – samudayaṭṭhāna

A *thing* is a something that is conditioned or determined, in this case by origin&passing away.

“Origin” (sam+ud+√i, literally: “going-up-together”) in the suttas refers 95 % of the time to things that have something to do with our very Dasein, our existence as suffering human beings. The remaining 5 % refer to everyday life examples. But in 100 % of all cases *samudaya* has a *conditional* meaning, that is to say, it describes a situation of conditionality. The different components happen in a structural way: “*When* this condition is, there is *simultaneously* that thing which is conditioned by this condition.” It is not temporal, it has nothing to do with arising in time, as in: “*First* this was not, *then* it arose.”

Origin is not the condition from which all suffering arises, but the condition from which all arises *as* suffering.

“Passing away” (vi+√i, literally: “going-away”) is sometimes used conditionally, sometimes temporally. Most explanations in the early commentaries of the Khuddaka Nikāya, however, describe *passing away* as conditional: “When this condition ceases, the conditioned thing ceases.”

I-making-mine-making – ahaṃkāramamaṃkāra

An alternative translation would be “I-obsession-mine-obsession”. It represents something more fundamental than the character trait of egotism. It is the urge to solidify an “I” by reflecting it in the mirror of “mine”. The etymology is somewhat uncertain. It is not clear whether *kāra* derives from the √kar, “make”, as one might assume, or from a vedic √kr, “honour”. Among experts opinion is divided on this point, and in the end it does not really matter anyway. *Ahaṃkāra* and *mamaṃkāra* are at any rate complementary counterparts to each other. They always appear in tandem in the discourses as well as in the real life of an unawakened being.

dispassion – virāgā

Rāgā has a broad spectrum of meanings: (red) colour, timbre, mood, incentive, lust, passion. The prefix *vi-* means: “apart, away, de~, counterpart, parallel, different to”. “Dispassion” is not always the appropriate translation of *virāga*, especially when it refers to the de-colouring of positive qualities. In those cases I use *fading away*.

taking-up – upādāna

Clinging, grasping, attachment; taking something up for identification. This is the condition for being, existence, Dasein (*bhava*).

I chose “taking-up” because it is closer to *upādāna* in grammatical terms: the object of *upādāna* in Pāli is in the genitive case, which corresponds better with “taking-up *of* something”, rather than “clinging *to* something”.

“Taking-up” is also closer in its literal meaning. *Upādāna* tries to patch a hole, to fill a gap, by taking something up, which is not yet there. It does not try to avoid a lack or a gap by clinging to something that is already there. See the chapters on *Suffering Suffering* and *Special Conditionality*.

craving – taṇhā

Wanting to be, condition for taking-up, compulsion to identification. In the Majjhima Nikāya commentary, however, craving is regarded as a *synonym* for identification (*tammayatā*), not as its condition.

being – bhava

Existence, being-there, Dasein. Heidegger would probably have objected to putting these terms together as synonyms. But *existence* in this book is *not* understood as the being of *things out there*. It is a description of the place of a sentient being in relation to its equipment of experience: the *there-being*. So, in this sense, existence does not *exist* without experience of it. But regardless of whether Heidegger would be satisfied with this or not – I may be forgiven, if we consider that even the most subtle philosophical distinctions won’t liberate us

from suffering. What “being” means in this book is amply explained and illustrated. So we can leave it at that.

special conditionality – idappaccayatā

Literally: *this-(here)-conditionality*. Sometimes translated as “conditionality of this and that”. This, however, is pretty nondescript, as after all every conditionality connects this with that. Besides, it misses the salient point.

dependent co-arising – paṭiccasamuppāda

There is a learned debate about the “co~” (sam~) in the translation here. “Co” means “together, simultaneously” (in everyday language “at the same *time*”). This is a thorn in the flesh of those who see *paṭiccasamuppāda* as a series of events, a *temporal succession*. Since the debate is pursued by scholars whose approach we have excluded in this book, it is not necessary to occupy ourselves with it. Besides, a brilliant critical examination of their position has been provided elsewhere by Venerable Ñāṇavīra (see index of sources).

Paṭicca is originally an *absolutive* (also called a *gerund*) to *paṭi+i* (“having gone back”), which takes the place of a preposition (with accusative), meaning “dependent on”. It is similar to *paccayā*, an ablative of the noun *paccaya* (also derived from *paṭi+i*, “[departing] from a condition”), which is being used like an adverb: “[in the way of being] conditioned (by)”. Both terms, *paṭicca* and *paccayā*, are practically synonyms despite their different word formation. Both are *always* used in a non-temporal context. The translation in this book: *paṭicca* = dependent (on), *paccayā* = conditioned (by).

one in higher training – sekha/sekkha

One in training, trainee. This refers to the practice of the noble eight-fold path, starting with stream-entry. The attribute “higher” is arbitrary but necessary because the word is not a technical term in English and could be trivialised. Aren’t we all trainees? No! Many who call themselves Buddhists haven’t even entered the kindergarten of Dhamma practice, let alone high-school.

complete penetrating knowledge – pariññā

Literally: “all around knowing”; it is the view from outside (or from above) that facilitates complete looking through.

concentration – samādhi

Abstract noun to *samādhīyati*, “to be placed together” (passive voice). There are three etymologically suitable candidates for translating these terms into English: *composure/to be composed* (etymology: “to be put down together”), *collectedness/to be collected* (“to be gathered together”), and *concentration/to be concentrated* (“to be brought to the middle together”). The classic option would be “concentration”, but it has a connotation of strain and restrictedness. Maybe that is the reason why some of the younger generation of Pāli nerds opt for “composure”. But this term has so many very different applications that it is too blurry for something as crystal clear as samādhi.

My favourite would be “collectedness”, but “collected” has already been used up for *saṅkhitta*. Understanding “the middle” as the here&now, and considering that I have never been traumatized by mistaken ideas of “one-pointedness”, I can live with “concentration”.

The German version of this book doesn’t even have a glossary entry here: “Sammlung” says it all.

1.5 The End of Satipaṭṭhāna

against-the-grain mindfulness – paṭissati

The prefix *paṭi~* goes by the board in most translations. In this book it has been honoured with an entire chapter. It even made it to the cover of this book.

highest knowledge – aññā

The attribute “highest” has been added a bit artificially (again!). It seemed necessary because in Pāli there are simply many more cognitive and ontological terms available when compared to English. And the addition expresses nicely that with the attainment of this kind of knowledge there is nothing else left to do.

2.1 The Sixth Sense

to reflect – paccavekkhati

(Etym.: *against+down+look*) *to mirror, survey, review. To contemplate* would be suitable too, but we have used it up already for *anupassanā*.

earth property – pathavīdhātu

Dhātu (quality, state) in its etymology has something to do with “holding, carrying”. It is something that holds itself, carries its own sign: a fundamental aspect of experience which cannot be further subdivided. Earth has the property of being earthy. With the body (touch sense) earthiness is *perceived* as solidity, hardness. But structurally speaking perception is “below” *dhātu*: it is more specific.

Thus, earth property can be experienced with other senses too. The general quality of earth that can be experienced with (more or less) all the senses, is *extension, expansion, taking up a space*. Earth, *paṭhavī*, literally means: that which is able to extend.

There is probably no word in English that fits all usages found in the suttas because *dhātu* is also used for the body humours and for relics. An etymologically fitting option would be “fundamental pattern of behaviour” or, ontologically more precise in Heideggerian, “the disclosedness of the there of a mode of Being, which is there for a Dasein”. This in turn would conflict with the “ten-thousand world-dhātus”, unless it is understood as the “inner-worldliness” (of the 10 000 things). But in M120, for example, *dhātu* seems to be more of a cosmological concept. In M123, where we would expect *lokadhātu*, we find simply *loka*. The dhat-us can be all dhat for us. No dhoubt!

by way of properties – dhātuso

Nominal adverb to *dhātu*; literally: “propertily”, but that would not be proper ... English.

(sense) faculties – indriyāni

Indriyāni only means “faculties”. The word “sense” does not exist in Pāli in that sense. Sometimes it is added in order to make it intelligible (to make it make sense) against the background of our Western

culture. The same applies to the (*sense*) *domains*. Never mind! The problem at hand is that no distinction is made between “sense” in “*sense* faculties” and in “*sensuality*” (the usual translation of *kāma*). *Kāma* means wishing. It denotes the activity of a scattered and unconcentrated heart. This activity is *based* on the sense faculties, but it is abandoned in the state of calm concentration, in contrast to the function of the sense faculties which is still there. But calm concentration, the collectedness of the heart, has not been on the agenda in our Western culture for the last 700 years. Therefore the difference between sense and sensuality is not understandable against the background of our Western culture, and the mix-up understandable.

mind – mano

The many terms denoting the non-material, “see-through” components of our existence are largely synonyms in English: mind, heart, soul, psyche, consciousness and so on.

This is due to our Western cultural background, where the predominant religion sees no value in exact definitions. In this book a clear attribution has been attempted – as a mere convention: *mano* = mind (faculty, domain, door of action), *citta* = heart (all kinds of things, see below), *ceto* = heart (again, see below). The differentiation in the Pāli suttas is not as precise and consistent as some translators would have it, but it certainly makes sense to provide more clarity by using consistent *terminology* here.

against the slope – paṭikkūla

From *kūla*, “slope, river banks”. Usually the figurative meaning is given as a translation: “objectionable, disagreeable” or even “repulsive, foul”. The latter version, however, contradicts the simile in the sutta: there is no mention of *rotten* grains! Readers will probably figure out for themselves why I have opted for the literal rendering. The subtitles are not part of the original sutta text anyway.

2.2 Corpses on the Path

(as if) one were to see – (seyyathāpi) passeyya

This mode in Pāli, known as “optative”, does not exist in English. But it means *optional*, so in this case: “He *may* see (*but doesn’t have to*, it is an option).” The optative mode is usually translated into a conditional clause (here: “if he were to see”, “if he saw”) or with the help of an auxiliary verb (“he may see, he might see”). Pāli does have a conditional mode too (very rare), but this, as opposed to English, is merely *speculative*: “If he saw (which is impossible and does not happen).” This optative, however, includes the possibility that he indeed gets to see ... a corpse (in this case).

Conclusion: Grammar is a complicated matter, but it does pay off to pay closer attention to the text in order to get the most benefit from it.

to compare – upasamharati

Literally: *gather-nearby* (with accusative case); other meanings: *to dispose, bring in, provide, generate* (with accusative and dative).

(is such a thing), has such a nature – (evaṃdhammo) evaṃbhāvi

Here we have another possessive compound: *owner of this state of being*. Of course we don’t say it like that in English. A much more pleasing alternative would be: “(... is of such a nature,) will be like this.” This is not an incorrect translation, but it is less literal and phenomenologically less precise. It does not express that the state of mortality is already present *right now*.

2.3 Where is Here?

of the flesh/not of the flesh – sāmisa/nirāmisa

Or *sensual/not sensual; sullied/unsullied*. *Sa-āmisa* originally means “with raw meat”. In the Suttavibhaṅga *sāmisa hattha* simply means “sticky hand (from eating)”. *Nirāmisa* is then “without raw meat”, *not of the flesh, spiritual, not sensual*.

Care should be taken here! *Not of the flesh* does not mean “not bodily”; and *not sensual* does not mean “without involvement of the senses”. And after all, *spiritual* can mean anything or nothing.

mindfulness-merged-in-the-body – kāyagatāsati

Alternative translations: “mindfulness immersed in the body”, “mindfulness gone to the body”, “mindfulness that has become body”, “mindfulness of (phenomena that) have become body”. The first three versions can be understood by everyone. As to how mindfulness or any phenomena can *become* body, this is something that only readers who have been able to follow the message of this book up to this point will understand.

attention – manasikāra

Directing the focus, mental disposition; the “making in the mind”, as one commentary glosses it. All experts agree: in this case *~kāra* does derive from *√kar* “make”.

true knowing – vijjā

The opposite of erroneous knowing or ignorance, *avijjā*. The structural blindness of ignorance is dealt with a great deal in the main text. It is a recursive, self-referencing structure. True knowing has the same structure. As soon as ignorance is done with, true knowing (or “knowingness”) takes its place on all levels. It is not about content, something “known”, but rather it is about two fundamental modes of experience that disclose all content in one of two ways – either as suffering/causing suffering, or as free from suffering/making an end to suffering.

2.4 When is Now?

heart – citta

The meaning and application of the word *citta* is colourful and varied. (The meaning of a homonymous, but unrelated word *citta* is “colourful” and “varied”.) It is difficult to define. (The Pali Text Society dictionary came to the same conclusion after a two page long

attempt.) The same goes for the English term “heart” in a psychological sense, so at least in this regard it is well suited as a translation.

“The one who knows” or “that which knows”, the knower or the knowing quality – the famous Thai *phū rū*, ฅຽຽ, would be another acceptable attempt, provided one does not take it to mean a permanent, independent entity or a self (“soul”). *Citta* is more complex and broader in meaning than the various single functions of experience.

Citta itself is the same for an awakened one and an ordinary human being. As to whether the heart is being used as an object of taking-up or not, that’s a different story. Therefore the heart comes in a liberated and not liberated version – and in many more versions as our discourse shows.

The word is used for mental (“hearty”?) things in contrast to material things. In other contexts it is used for mental things in contrast to bodily things. Sometimes *citta* is synonymous with *mano* (e.g. Vinaya Pr. 3), but usually not; occasionally it is equivalent to *viññāṇa* in certain contexts; and sometimes related to *cetanā*, but in a more general sense. The meaning has to be determined in each context anew.

collected – saṅkhitta

Literally: “thrown together”; *focused*, *consolidated*. Its opposite, *vikkhitta*, literally means “thrown apart” and is translated here as “scattered”. In another context *saṅkhitta* has a negative connotation: “stuck, rigid”. Referring to speech, it means “taken together, summarized, to the point”. The commentary, however, throws it together into one pot with *saṅkuṭṭita*, “shrivelled” or “shrunk”.

expanded – mahaggata

“Having grown (lit.: gone) great”, refers to the heart in calm and concentrated meditation (*jhāna*).

surpassed – sauttara

“With something higher”. The heart without anything higher (*anuttara*, unsurpassed) is the heart of a liberated one who has nothing higher to attain.

concentrated – samāhita

This attribute applies to any stage of a collected heart; it is not limited to jhāna. The term *unified* is more specific, and refers to concentration from 2nd jhāna upwards – *ekodibhāva*.

one who is able to contemplate the heart – cittānupassī

This is the literal meaning. The translation of the Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta in this book uses the more pleasing, but not so precise translation “heart-contemplating”. With this, the reason given by the Buddha in M118 is not so convincing as to why good mindfulness and awareness are necessary preconditions for bringing mindfulness of the breathing to the level of contemplation of the heart. With the translation that is used in this case – “one who *is able* to contemplate” – his rationale makes more sense.

This literal rendering of course applies to all four application-bases of mindfulness in the same way. The other three steps of contemplation of the heart – *gladdening*, *concentrating*, *liberating* the heart – are ordinary present participles in the Pāli.

one who is able to experience the heart – cittapaṭisaṃvedī

The same applies here.

2.5 What are Things?

hindrance – nīvaraṇa

These things hinder the arising of wisdom and concentration, but not in the sense of slowing them down. They *prevent* them.

wishing-will – kāmaccchanda

Chanda means “will, wanting, interest, impetus, zeal, enthusiasm”. For wish or wishing (*kāma*) see the discussion of the (*sense*) *faculties*. Translations such as *sense desire* and other similar terms are not incorrect; they are just easily misunderstood and too specific. This topic is dealt with extensively in the chapters on the four noble truths.

one who looks on with diligence – ajjhupekkhitā

This is a *nomen agentis* (“doer noun”) to *ajjhupekkhati* (adhi + upa + ikkhati). Since *upekkhati*, “looking close”, has been expanded in meaning – “to be equanimous” –, one could also translate *ajjhupekkhitā* with: “one who equanimously looks on with diligence”.

2.6 The Nature of Things

(five) taking-up-heaps – (pañc’)upādānakkhandha

Often translated as *aggregates of clinging* (*aggregates affected by clinging, clinging-aggregates*). Clinging has already been discussed. An aggregate is a group of components that have been assembled. It has a defined dimension or size. The *khandhas* are not things that have been put together. And they do not have a defined limit. The word *heap* describes this quite well. A heap of sand fades into shallowness as one gets further away from its centre. The taking-up-heaps fade into the blur of the horizon of experience, and into the infinity of the hierarchical levels of experience. *Heaps* also describes the homogeneity of the “components” (likewise in the word *dukkhakkhandha* – “heap of suffering”). For an arahant there are no taking-up-heaps and no heap of suffering, because there is no more taking-up. For an arahant there are only heaps – *khandhā*.

(four) main realities – (cattaro) mahābhūtāni

Great, encompassing, basic elements: earth, water, fire, wind. They are what makes up the form-heap. They are not dependent on contact, i.e. experience.

(Expositors of the teaching who are inclined to idealism do not like this aspect of the Dhamma at all.)

Earth, water, fire, wind are also listed as being four of the five or six *properties* (dhātu). So what is the difference? The suttas do not provide any definition, but the main realities are almost always mentioned in the context of form – that which does not depend on contact, that is to say, they are structurally (not temporally) *before* or *above* experience. The properties seem to emphasise appearance *in* experience. In the overall context of the teaching the difference is not really relevant.

A note on linguistics: in Pāli, terms related to being and experience are often understood and constructed quite differently than in English. *Bhūta* is the (passive) past participle of *bhavati* (“to become, to be”). In English it is understood and expressed as “(having) become”. But that is not really correct, because 1.) *to be* cannot be understood and expressed as a passive in English, and 2.) *to be* is ambiguous: a) a verb roughly meaning “to exist”; b) an auxiliary verb to form, for example, the passive mode “to be made something” ... for example in “to be *made be*” – that would be the “correct” translation of *bhūta*.

Those inclined to idealism might object: “*Reality* is too grand a term for something as lowly as matter!” Reply: Nothing is grand about reality. Reality is merely the sphere of things (from Latin *res*, thing). It is what it is.

Another objection: “To call the elements *realities* sounds as if they would exist out there on their own.” Reply: Things become real dependent on conditions, see the *What are Things?* and *The Nature of Things* chapters. (In passing: In German the corresponding term is *Wirklichkeit*, the sphere of *Wirken* and *Wirkung*, of cause and effect.)

Well, since no-one seems to object to the translation of *yathābhūtaṃ* (literally “as it has become”, or, as above, “as it is made be”) as “according to reality” or “as it really is”, I consider the discussion to be settled.

Bhūta as a noun also means “living being”, “nature”, and more.

contact – (sam)phassa

Abstract noun to *phusati*, “to touch”. “Touch” would be correct as a translation, but it is too specific: one might associate it with the body faculty, the “touch sense”. But *phassa* refers to all six senses. The objects or external domains of touching with the body are denoted by the future participle to *phusati* – *phoṭṭhabbā*, “tangibles” (not “touchables”). *Touching* (with the body faculty) – the activity of the touch sense – must be distinguished from *body contact* (*kāya-samphassa*), as opposed to mind contact, viz. the juxtaposition of the “material” and the “mental” aspect of experience. Therefore, in order to avoid confusion it is not recommended to use the word “touch” for *phassa*.

form – rūpa

This word has three different levels of meaning in Pāli and in English alike: 1. *Form* as a *heap* (*rūpakhandha*), always in the singular: that which “triggers” experience, the four main realities; 2. the external *domain* of seeing (*āyatana*), in the plural: visible *forms*, visible objects in general; 3. specific *eye-perception*: *form*, shape, outline or gestalt. Immediate experience of the form-heap displays the same ambiguity for the other senses as well. In the case of hearing, we have as outer domain *sound* (*sadda*) and as perception *voice* (*sadda*); smelling we have: *odour* (*gandha*) and *fragrance* (*gandha*); tasting: *taste* (*rasa*) and *juice* (*rasa*); touching: *tangible* (*phoṭṭhabba*) and *touch* (*phoṭṭhabba*).

The first sutta in the numerical discourses plays with those two levels of meaning – sense object and perception. It’s all about the ignorance-drive in its most potent version, the naked sex-drive. That *language* does not make a distinction between the “pure” sense object of (visible) form and the perception “form” (figure, shape), illustrates the dilemma of the unawakened human being who is subject to the drives. The Buddha did not teach truisms. This sutta tells us more than just the fact that men like women and vice versa.^{uu} It

uu The current permutations of this theme would have greatly served the purpose of the sixth council to substantially increase the number of discourses in the sutta piṭaka.

shows that perception is the product of lasting lusting: the programme of reacting to something has been executed already.

If these nuances of meaning are ignored, the discourse Aṅguttara Nikāya 1.1 is quite bland: “I do not regard another taste that so overwhelms the heart of a man as the taste of a woman.” (The commentary says that this refers to the taste of the food she is cooking for the man. Either the commentator was lacking imagination or he was completely inhibited. Or, another possibility, he was totally free of the drives already.) Taking the two levels of meaning into account, the text suddenly gains power: “I do not regard another taste that so overwhelms the heart of a man as the juice of a woman.” Or: “I do not regard another form that so overwhelms the heart of a woman as the build of a man. ... I do not regard another odour that so overwhelms the heart of a man as the fragrance of a woman. ... I do not regard another tangible that so overwhelms the heart of a woman as the caress of a man.”

This juicy digression is not only meant for illumination purposes, but also to loosen the book up a bit, to prevent it from getting too dry.

perception – saññā

The corresponding verb *sañjānāti*, literally means “to know together”. Just as with feeling (*vedanā*) and the corresponding verb *vedayati* (or *vedeti*), we have here cases of meaning in the so called medium mode. This mode, which is something in between the active and the passive mode, does not exist in English, and is therefore mostly understood and expressed in a reflexive, self-referencing way: Perception perceives perception (itself). Feeling feels feeling.

to determine-up as determined – saṅkhatamabhisāṅkharoti

This term alone and how it is being used in the discourse should be enough to make it clear that determinations (*saṅkhārā*) and the determined (*saṅkhata*) are different things. The prefix *abhi-*, translated here as *~up* (as in “to *set up*, to *make up*”), emphasises the aspect of “activity” of determinations. In scholasticism *saṅkhārā* is interpreted in such a way that it is meant to mean “sometimes

determining and sometimes determined”. This is similar to the assertion that the word “murderer” can sometimes mean “someone murdered”. Of course a murderer can also be murdered, but *as* someone murdered he is on a lower level of generality than *his* murderer; he is determined by him. Just as determinations are *also* determined. But then they are determined-up *as determined*.

form-ness – rūpatta

Abstract noun (neuter) for *rūpa*: the state of being form. The same applies to the abstract nouns of the other four heaps. The grammatical form *rūpattāya* here is the dative case of purpose, literally but clumsily expressed: “Determinations determine-up form as determined for the purpose of the state of being form.” Indeed, giving a purpose is exactly what determinations are doing!

Often-times translated as: “They determine form *as* form.” This is not wrong, but it leaves out a few subtle, though important, details. All of this applies to the other four heaps accordingly.

acquisition, taking-up – upadhi, upādāna

These two terms are not really synonyms in Pāli. They have different functions, but at least one thing in common: when they are no longer there, the end of suffering has been reached. Etymologically, they mean: “holding nearby” and “taking-up nearby”. Their place in the context of the Dhamma: *upadhi* is almost identical with craving and is the condition for *upādāna*. *Upādāna* also means “fuel”. This is certainly no coincidence (see *ablaze*).

heart – ceto

I have used the word “heart” for *citta* already. The PTS dictionary says: “There is no cogent evidence of a clear separation of their respective fields of meaning; a few cases indicate the rôle of *cetas* [*cetas* is the stem form, *ceto* is nominative] as seat of *citta*, whereas most of them show no distinction.” Even if they are synonyms, it would have been nice to use a third word for the last member of the *mano – citta – ceto* trilogy, but I couldn’t find any suitable candidate.

will-passion – chandarāga

In the suttas this compound is treated as a synonym of *taking-up*. What is taken-up is a thing for identification; that is why there is this will to be passionate about it.

samaṇa – samaṇa

Etymologically it has something to do with “peaceful” or “striving”. Often translated as “monk” or “ascetic”, which does not really hit the nail on the head. A *samaṇa* is someone on the spiritual quest who does not take a rank, class or caste in society, as opposed to the priests, *brāhmaṇā*.

2.7 All and More

domains – āyatanāni

(*sense*) *bases*, (*sense*) *media*. There are two other important kinds of domains in the suttas: the domains of transcendence (*abhibhāyatanāni*) and the formless domains. More translations, if you please? The PTS dictionary has: stretch, extent, reach, compass region; sphere, locus, place, spot; position, occasion, exertion, doing, working, practice, performance; sphere.

tangibles – phoṭṭhabbā

Literally: “those that have to be touched”. It is a *future passive participle* (also called *gerundive*) to *√phus* (“touch”). In German there is no such choice of words to express *phoṭṭhabbā*, as there is in English. So in German it is “touchables”, a word that one has to get used to. (This makes up for the missing word for *ceto* in English.)

eye – cakkhu

The sense domains play a central role in experience. It is only natural that the way language reflects this role tells us a lot about the way it is being understood, dependent on the particular cultural background.

Let us assume that the language of the Buddha expresses the middle approach, avoiding the extremes of materialism and idealism. That would mean that *cakkhu* denotes a part of the body that is equipped with the faculty of seeing. It has (roughly speaking) a material component, the eye-ball, and a mental component, eye-consciousness.

A purely scientific approach would reduce the eye to some sort of camera and exclude the question as to where the mental aspect (eye-consciousness) comes in. On the other end of the spectrum the other extreme is idealism, which claims that the eye-ball is a mere lump of flesh that does not know anything. Seeing is understood as a purely mental affair.

Proponents of idealism suggest that *cakkhu* refers to this mental aspect – “the seeing” or “the one who sees”. They say that the Buddha used another word, *akkhi*, when he was talking about the eye of flesh. This *idea* is discussed in the main text. Here are just a few observations on how the words *are used* in the suttas:

Akkhi does not appear very often, and when it does it is only in contexts that have nothing to do with seeing. What else could the eye do? Weeping, blinking, squinting, being cast down – these are the examples in the canon.

When the liberated bhikkhunī Subhā of Thig 366 ff. was harassed by a man who had cast an eye at her, who gave her the eye, she pulled out her own eye and gave it to him. If the flesh vs. spirit theory were correct, then one would expect the word *akkhi* here, since “seeing” cannot be pulled out. But the word *cakkhu* is being used.

The same holds true for the alternatives “of the flesh” for ears and nose: *Kaṇṇa* and *nāsika* only occur when the talk is about poking around in them, picking them or cutting them off – not as body modification, but as a corporal punishment, which was common at the time.

The tongue is always *jivhā*, no matter if it is being used for tasting or sticking out. The experiencing body (*kāya*) is expressly called “endowed with consciousness” (*sa-viññāṇaka*). There is no “corpse (*sarīra*) plus added touch faculty”. (Zombies do not appear in the canon to my knowledge.) And there is only *one* mind (*mano*) anyway.

Idealism seems to be more of a typical German problem. For example the word *eye-consciousness* sounds really strange in German (“Augenbewusstsein”). I only use it in sutta translations. In normal everyday language I would say *seeing-consciousness* (“Sehbewusstsein”). This is a nice example of how different cultural backgrounds and languages condition each other.

proliferation – papañca

Branching out, escalation. A kind of mental getting out of hand. What this proliferation does is described in the quotes from M1 about conceiving and delighting.

non-indicative consciousness – viññāṇaṃ anidassanaṃ

Not characterising, not manifesting, not pointing consciousness. What this *term* points to is explained in the main text.

ablaze – āditta

Burning; it is the passive past participle of *ādippati*, so actually “to be burnt”. This is the second of many instances where the Buddha uses fire as an analogy for ontological topics – to describe “how being is”. In Pāli there is this already mentioned mode of medium, which has both an active meaning (“to *be* on fire”) and a passive meaning (“to be *set* on fire”). This medium meaning occurs frequently (although the actual grammatical *form* of the medium is rather rare) when the talk is of being and experiencing. In English this is usually expressed through reciprocity (“each other”) or reflexiveness (“itself/oneself”). Fire and burning are prime examples of this: fire burns the fuel, but fuel makes the fire burn – they burn “each other”. As soon as there is no (more) fuel the fire is not annihilated, but it goes out, it extinguishes “itself”.

to know from a higher level – abhijānāti

Literally: “to know higher”. In this sutta the term replaces the ordinary perceiving (sañjānāti) of the ordinary person. The higher level is the level of understanding perception, whereas perception itself only understands the perceived things or percepts.

2.8 Truth and Reality

awakening factor – (sam)bojjhaṅga

... or *awakening quality*. *Awakening factor* expresses better that one of them is not all, rather that all of them have to come together.

fulfilment – pāripūrī

Completion, perfection, an abstract of “fill” or “full”.

cessation – nirodha

Does cessation mean that the thing that ceases is gone? It depends on the function that is ceasing. If it ceases *to be*, then it's gone. If its function was something else, it might still be there after that function ceases. For the arahant, for whom all kinds of things have ceased, ignorance, craving, taking-up are gone. Consciousness, for example, has ceased to point to a self (anidassana), but (at least) as long as the arahant has not cast off his body, consciousness is still there. See also Luang Pū Dūn's aphorism on feeling in the “How do arahants function?” chapter.

wise attention penetrating to the source – yoniso manasikāra

This quality is mentioned in many contexts of the teaching as being the most important single *internal* factor. *Manasikāra* has already been dealt with above. *Yoniso* is another nominal adverb. This time derived from “yoni”, meaning the source or the very basis or descent, birth, birthplace, realm of existence, nature, matrix, the female reproductive organ ... Figuratively speaking, *yoniso manasikāra* thus means penetrating to the source, knowing context, wise, thorough ... “Wise reflection” is not wrong, but it suggests “thinking and pondering”, which can be part of *yoniso manasikāra*, but is not the crucial factor.

And by the way, the most important single *external* factor is friendship with good, wise people – *kalyāṇamittatā*.

thing-steadiness – dhammaṭṭhitatā

“*thing-placedness*”; of things, the state of being placed. *Thing-orderliness* (dhammaniyāmatā) does not deserve its own entry to the glossary. The term is self-explanatory and not even the spellchecker complained.

2.9 Suffering Suffering

dying – maraṇa

One could also say *death*. To choose *dying* as a translation only serves the purpose of distinguishing it from *maccu*, here translated as “death”. The chosen terminology carries no metaphysical implications, and has nothing to do with a lack of “courage for anxiety in the face of death”.

coming-into-the-world – jāti

The root of *jāti* is *√jan*, “produce”. *Jāti* is the noun to the passive form *jāyati*, “to be produced”, that is “the being produced”. An active form only occurs in the causative – *janeti*, “to make produce”. But there is an *active* present participle of the *passive* form (or base). Something like a bebop tango of grammar! The English language does not offer such a difficult to imitate hybrid as this. In Pāli this form (also called: present *passive* participle), is rare. It comes up primarily with verbs that express ontological matters and contexts. This active present participle of the passive base is *jāyamāna*, “being busy with being produced”.

Since scholars usually translate *jāti* as “birth”, I cross-checked passages in the canon that unambiguously deal with the event of delivery. The *activity* of the mother, namely to deliver, is *vi-jāyati*. It is exactly the same word that, according to scholasticism, is meant to mean “to be born” (passive), with a prefix (*vi-*), which expresses separation. But *vijāyati* quite obviously does not mean “to be born away”, but “to deliver away” or “to bring into the world”.

When a verb is being used in an active way, but possesses a passive base, then it is not a far stretch to assume that this form is medium in meaning: *jāyati* means “to produce oneself”, “to bring oneself into the world” or “to deliver oneself”. “Self-delivery” would sound a bit strange, so I chose “coming-into-the-world” as the translation of *jāti*. This matches the meaning precisely and fits quite well in terms of grammar (one “comes into the world” and is “busy coming into the world”). Regrettably in terms of etymology there is a little flaw, because “world” is not contained in *jāti*. But the sense of coming-into-the-world is precisely what is being described by *coming-here, entry, coming-forth, appearance of the heaps, receiving of the domains*. According to the definition, this takes place in *this or that group of beings* – if one would permit this to count as “world”.

By the way, the “four kinds of birth” – production from an egg, production by means of a placenta, production by/in moisture (cell division?), spontaneous arising (without parents as in the case of ether-eal beings) – are referred to as *yoni* in Pāli (as in *yoniso manasikāra*).

visible here&now – sandiṭṭhiko

... or *in this world, directly visible, in one’s sight*. No attainment of transcendence of any kind is necessary to see what is before us.

inviting verification – ehipassiko

“*come&see-ish*”, *inviting to come&see*.

leading onward – opanayiko

Also: *leading inward* or *near* or just *leading*, depending on how the prefix *opa~* is understood: “down+forward” (*ava+pa*) or as a stretched “nearby” (*upa*). Another reading: *opaneyyiko*.

for themselves – paccattam

Adverb, *paṭi+attan*, “vis-à-vis oneself”. The word “self” is a mere reflexive pronoun and has nothing to do with an assumed “self”, the eternal entity. The same applies if one prefers the translation “personally” or “individually”.

wanting – icchā

Similar to *kāma*, which has been rendered as “wishing” in order to distinguish them from each other. In the suttas *icchā* refers to specific wishes, whereas *kāma* is a mode – or rather *the* mode – that governs a major part of unawakened existence.

2.10 Special Conditionality

craving for wishing, craving for being, craving for potential being – kāmataṇhā, bhavataṇhā, vibhavataṇhā

Since craving is one of the most general and basic existential categories, *kāma*, wishing, likewise has to be understood in a most general sense: We all have *kāmataṇhā*, therefore “craving for sensuality” (or even: “sexual craving”) is much too narrow as a definition.

Figuratively speaking, *taṇhā* also means “thirst”. Whether that is a better word than *craving* is a matter of taste and definition. The same holds true for words like *greed*, *covetousness*, *desire*, *lust* and so on, which are largely synonyms in English. Even so, it is necessary to define and assign them, because the Pāli equivalents are technical terms with a distinct meaning. Thirst in the sense of craving for something potable is *pipāsā* in Pāli.

Vibhava does not mean “non-being”. The prefix *vi-* points to separation, distance, difference: *de-*, *~apart*, *different to*, *parallel to*. “Non-being” in Pāli would be *abhava*. This word does exist, is very rare and only comes up in a completely different context.

to delight, delectation – abhinandati, nandī

Delight is a “higher” (*abhi-*), a stronger *delectation*. Both words have the same *√nand*, “be glad”. The “higher”, expressed by the emphasising prefix *abhi-*, can also be understood in a different way: it is delectation on a higher level. *Delight* (a synonym for *craving*) is the condition for delectation (a synonym for *taking-up*). This is exactly what M38 is telling us.

urge underlies – anusaya anuseti

Literally: “Lying down-along lies down-along”. *Anu~* expresses following or accompanying; the $\sqrt{s\bar{i}}$, “lie down”, is the root for the noun *anusaya*, as well as for the verb *anuseti*. Both words are used in different contexts in various compounds, but always for something bad. They express failure or inevitability. The translation here is not optimal, but it is also no worse than others. The meaning is more or less conveyed.

2.11 Detox

remainderless cessation-through-dispassion – asesavirāganīrodha

In Pāli *virāga* has an instrumental meaning in this compound: “cessation *by* or *after* dispassion”. Compounds in English are mostly understood as a connection in the genitive case, that is why dispassion-cessation could be misunderstood as “cessation *of* dispassion”. In the suttas *virāga* in connection with *nīrodha* refers to dispassion as being the immediate cause for cessation.

to become disenchanted, disenchantment – nibbindati, nibbidā

To become wearied of, to have enough of, to turn away from (in Pāli with locative) – all of these are good translations. Etymology: *nī~* (“away, out”) + $\sqrt{vid}$ (“find”). It is the sobering effect that comes after finding out how things really are.

adherence to habits&tasks – sīlabbattaparamāsa

One of ten fettering things (and one of three fetters that are abandoned at stream-entry); literally: the “fondling of habits&tasks/duties”. For more details see the “Navigation of taking-up” chapter.

2.12 How Does it Work?

right view – sammādiṭṭhi

This has nothing to do with “opinion”! It’s all about the way of seeing the world and one’s own place in it – *the* topic of this book.

right resolve – sammāsaṅkappa

Right thinking, right intention; the etymology of *saṅkappa* would also allow “attribution”. *Saṅkappa*, *chanda* and *cetanā* – all three have been happily translated as “intention”, but they are completely different things. *Chanda* is “will”, i.e. intentional intention. *Saṅkappa* has something to do with the mode of thinking, the direction as to where thoughts are supposed to go. It is no longer present in the second jhāna and up. *Cetanā* on the other hand is present in all experience, even in the formless domains. It is part of *name*, and provides the connection between the different aspects of experience.

faculties, five (spiritual) – indriyāni

Not to be confused with the six (sense) faculties, which are also referred to as *indriyāni*. The five here being: faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, wisdom. What is remarkable here is that the faculty of faith is still being developed even after attaining the path. Or, more precisely, it is *only* being developed after attaining the path. Before this, it is faith as “an advance”.

passion, hatred and delusion – rāga, dosa, moha

This triarchy is the root of all evil. Sometimes *lobha*, “greed”, takes the place of *rāga* (see M9). These two terms are almost synonymous. *Rāga* can mean all sort of things. It is both an everyday word and a technical term in the Dhamma. There is no one-to-one equivalent in English.

Dhamma terms based on *√raj*, “be bright, colourful”, are used for entanglement on the highest or most general level; they are thus more general than *greed* and *hatred*. But *√raj*-words can also be used for very worldly affairs such as dyeing cloth.

Unfortunately the word “greed” also has to serve for *abhijjhā*. The latter seems to be more like greed in the sense of a specific mental action (wanting to get something) that arises from the roots of *lobha*, *dosa* and *moha* (see M9). Bad news for those who like their Dhamma neat and orderly: these terms are not always used in a strict or uniform sense. Sorry!

one-peakedness – ekaggatā

This is usually translated as “one-pointedness”, but this leads to the wrong assumption that the heart in samādhi is in a narrowed down state with a very limited horizon of experience. *Agga* can be an adjective – “best, highest, foremost” – or a noun – “peak, summit, meeting place”. *One-peakedness* of the heart thus means: a high and excellent meeting (= summit) place in which the heart gathers.

jhāna – jhāna

Noun to *jhāyati*, which, depending on the root, can mean “to meditate” or “to burn” (Again this suggests an allegory!). There are good and bad types of *jhāna* or meditation mentioned in the texts. As a technical term it refers only to good meditation, in other words, *jhāna* is the definition of right concentration. As a technical term it is therefore better left untranslated. This “good meditation” is free from hindrances and endowed with the *jhāna* factors, symptoms of a cool, calm, clear and collected heart.

Epilogue: The Liberated Heart

here&now – diṭṭheva dhamme

The literal meaning depends on the reading: “*just* (in) the seen thing” (*diṭṭh’eva* ...) or “*as* in the seen thing” (*diṭṭhe’va* ...).

fading away – virāga

Elsewhere *virāga* is translated as “dispassion” – see entry above.

Pāli – English

- abhijānāti – to know from a higher level, 369^{vv}
 abhijjhā – greed, covetousness, 346
 abhinandati – to delight, 373
 āditta – ablaze, 369
 ahaṃkāramamaṃkāra – I-making-mine-making, ~obsession, 352
 ajjhatabhiddhā – internally&externally, 351
 ajjhupekkhitā – one who looks on with diligence, 362
 akālika – timeless, non-temporal, 347
 anidassana – non-indicative, not pointing, 369
 aññā – highest knowledge, 355
 anupassī – contemplating; one capable of contemplating , 345
 anusaya – urge, tendency, 374
 ariyasāvaka – noble-disciple, ~hearer, ~follower, 350
 āsavā – drives, 348
 asesavirāganirodha – rem.less cessation-through-dispassion, 374
 āyatanāni – domains, 367
 atthi/hoti – to be, to exist, 347
 bhava – being, being-there, there-being, existence, Dasein, 353
 bhava~/vibhavataṇhā – craving for being/~potential being, 373
 bojjhaṅga – awakening factor, 370
 cakkhu/akkhi – eye, 367
 ceto – heart, 366
 chandarāga – will-passion, 367
 citta – heart, 359
 cittānupassī – (one capable of) contemplating the heart, 361
 dhamma – Dhamma, thing, 346, 347
 dhammaṭṭhitatā – thing-steadiness, 371
 dhātu – property, quality, state, 356
 diṭṭheva dhamme – here&now, 376

vv The numbers refer to the pages in the English – Pāli glossary.

- domanassa – grief, 345
 dosa – hatred, aversion, 375
 dukkha – suffering, pain / painful, unpleasant 345
 ehīpassiko – inviting to come&see, 372
 ekaggatā – one-peakedness, 376
 ekāyana – direct, having one direction, 344
 evāmbhāvī – having such a nature, 358
 icchā – wanting, 373
 idappaccayatā – special conditionality, 354
 indriya – (sense) faculty/(spiritual) faculty, 356/375
 jāti – coming-into-the-world, production, birth, 371
 kāmacchanda – wishing-will, sensual desire, 362
 kāmatanḥā – craving for wishing, 369
 kāya – body, group, collection, 351
 kāyagatāsati – mindfulness-merged-in-the-body, 359
 lokāyata – metaphysics, 348
 mahābhūtāni – main realities, elements, 362
 mahaggata – expanded, become great, 360
 manasikāra – attention, 359
 mano – mind, 357
 maraṇa – dying, death, 371
 moha – delusion, 375
 nandī – delectation, 373
 nibbidā – disenchantment 374
 nibbindati – to become disenchanted, to turn away, 374
 nirodha/nirujjhati – cessation/to cease , 370
 nīvaraṇa – hindrance, 361
 opanayiko – leading onward, ~inward, ~near, 372
 paccattaṃ – for oneself, personally, individually, 372
 paccavekkhati – to reflect, to contemplate, 356
 pallaṅka – throne posture, throne, divan, 349
 (pañc')upādānakkhandhā – (five) taking-up-heaps , 362

- papañca – proliferation, branching out, escalation, 369
- parimukhaṃ – all around ready-to-use, 349
- pariññā – complete penetrating knowledge, 355
- pāripūrī – fulfilment, completion, perfection 370
- paṭhavī – earth, 356
- paṭīccasamuppāda – dependent co-arising, 354
- paṭikkūla – against the slope, disagreeable, 357
- paṭisaṃvedī – experiencing; one capable of experiencing, 349
- paṭissati – against-the-grain mindfulness, 355
- phassa, samphassa – contact, touch, 364
- phoṭṭhabbā – tangibles, objects of touch, 367
- rāga – passion, 375
- rūpa – form, 364
- rūpatta – form-ness, 366
- samādhi – concentration, collectedness, 355
- samāhita – concentrated, collected, 361
- sāmisa/nirāmisa – of the flesh/not of the flesh, 358
- sammādiṭṭhi – right view, 374
- sammāsaṅkappa – right resolve, right thinking, 375
- sampajañña – full awareness, 351
- samudaya – origin, 352
- sandiṭṭhiko – visible here&now, 372
- saṅkhārā – determinations, 350
- saṅkhatamabhisāṅkharoti – to determine-up as determined, 365
- saṅkhitta – collected, consolidated, (stuck, taken together), 360
- saññā – perception, 365
- sati – mindfulness, 349
- satipaṭṭhānā – application-bases of mindfulness, 351
- sauttara – surpassed, 361
- sekha – one in higher training, trainee, 354
- sīlabbattaparāmāsa – adherence to habits&tasks, 374
- taṇhā – craving, 353

- upādāna** – taking-up, clinging, 353, 366
upasaṃharati – to compare, to dispose 358
vaya – passing-away, 352
vediyamāna – sensing one, feeling ~, experiencing ~, 347
vijjā – true knowing, knowingness, 359
virāgā – dispassion, fading away , 353, 376
yoniso manasikāra – wise attention penetrating to the source, 370

Abbreviations

- D:** *Dīgha Nikāya* – collection of long discourses of the Buddha and his awakened disciples; just how long they can be is illustrated by the golden thread running through this book.
M: *Majjhima Nikāya* – collection of discourses of middle length
S: *Saṃyutta Nikāya* – collection of discourses grouped by topic
A: *Aṅguttara Nikāya* – collection of discourses arranged in a numerical order according to subdivided categories
UD: *Udāna* – collection of inspired utterances of the Buddha
SN: *Sutta Nipāta* – collection of discourses in verse
ITI: *Itivuttaka* – collection of short discourses with aphorisms
DHP: *Dhammapada* – collection of verses
THIG: *Therīgāthā* – verses of awakened bhikkhunīs

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About the Author

I was born in the Weser mountains on a Thursday, on the 13th day of the waxing moon in the month of Visākha in the year of the earth dog. My parents raised me with Christian values without any affected piety and without force or dogma. They provided good schooling and everything else, for which I am very grateful. Now they are semi-Buddhists which may partly be my fault.

As a kid I was a regular Jesus-fan. This enthusiasm was dampened, because some people whom I considered to be experts in Jesus and/or God were not able or willing to answer my questions about responsibility for my own actions sufficiently or at all. I did not know at the time that this topic is called *kamma*.

As a teenager I imagined becoming a hermit living on a mountain. Now I am one. But in those days in my inner image of my potential appearance as a sage I had long hair and a beard. My robe was white and flowing.

In those years existential questions arose. I did not know at the time that this topic is referred to as the *suffering of determinations*. I decided to keep such questions to myself because I suspected that it would be pointless to talk them through with my friends.

I felt the wish to practise meditation, even if I didn't know what it was and didn't intuit that I was doing it already. Because I also did not know at the time that those strange but very pleasant states, which sometimes arose spontaneously, are called *samādhi*. However, I did notice that those states occurred more often when I practised yoga according to a book which belonged to my mother.

These experiences and the aftermath of the flower power movement brought up the desire in me to make a break for India. But I didn't bolt off straight away. Instead I brought myself to finish school first. And after that I took on a number of very different jobs.

During that phase I tried in various ways to find existential answers and the Great OM. I finally encountered the teaching of kamma in the *Bhagavad Gītā*.

Yet again I had a mystical experience. Since by then I had read books on Zen, I was convinced: "Now I am enlightened!" This eased off after a couple of days or so.

Since the end of the third decade of this lifetime I go for refuge to Buddha, Dhamma, Saṅgha. An Australian monk whom I met in Thailand taught me the basics of the teaching. He settled my few remaining doubts with the words: "It makes sense." More was not required.

For more than twenty years I come into the world as a bhikkhu. I am still closely connected in gratitude to my mentor in Thailand, with whom I spent the first five years in robes.

Things got really exciting when I started to roam the most remote forests of Thailand on tudong walkabout. Many times I encountered danger.

HOW EMBARRASSING!
MY BACKGROUND OF
EXISTENCE - A SHEET
OF PAPER ...

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After my carefree time as a junior monk I received an offer to help establish a forest monastery in the Frankonian mountains. A year later *Muttodaya* was founded and dedicated to the Buddha. Since that time I have lived there.

Original Quotes & Notes

- 1 *Vediyamānassa* kho panāhaṃ, bhikkhave, idaṃ dukkhaṃ'ti paññāpemi, ayaṃ dukkhasamudayo'ti paññāpemi, ayaṃ dukkhanirodho'ti paññāpemi, ayaṃ dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā'ti paññāpemi. (*Titthāya-tanādi Sutta*, A3.62).

For den *Existerende* er det at existere ham hans høiest Interesse, og Interesseretheden i at existere Virkeligheden. (*Avsluttende uvidenskabelige efterskrift*, p.289.) The page numbers of translations used (if any – see index of sources) are given in square brackets: [263].

Clearing the Path, p.5

- 2 It is a re-written book rather than a translation of the German original. Cognizance (or understanding) and language are interrelated, and since cognizance is what this book is all about, a different language requires more than just a translation. This is most obvious in the glossary. Elsewhere this approach gives me more freedom to leave out passages that are irrelevant for English readers, to alter others and to add new aspects.
- 3 Vil man nu antage, at den abstrakte Tænkning er det Høieste, saa følger deraf, at Videnskaben og Tænkerne stolt forlade Existenten og lade oss andere Mennesker det Værste at døie. Ja, der følger deraf tillige Noget for den abstrakte Tænkner selv, at han nemlig, da han jo dog ogsaa selv er en Existerende, paa en eller anden Maade maa være distrahit. (*Avsluttende uvidenskabelige efterskrift*, p.276 [252])
- 4 Ko cāhāro catunnaṃ satipaṭṭhānānaṃ? ‘Tīṇi sucaritāni’tissa vacanīyaṃ. (*Avijjā Sutta*, A10.61)
- 5 Tasmātiha tvaṃ, bhikkhu, ādimeva visodhehi kusalesu dhammesu. Ko cādi kusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ? Silāṇa suvisuddhaṃ, diṭṭhi ca ujukā. Yato kho te, bhikkhu, silāṇa suvisuddhaṃ bhavissati diṭṭhi ca ujukā, tato tvaṃ, bhikkhu, silāṃ nissāya sile paṭiṭṭhāya cattāro satipaṭṭhāne tividhena bhāveyyāsi. (*Bhikkhu Sutta*, S47.3)
- 6 “All things are not-self.” When one sees this with wisdom, one turns away from suffering. This is the path to purity. – Sabbe dhammā anattā’ti. Yadā paññāya passati, atha nibbindati dukkhe. Esa maggo visuddhiyā. (*Dhp* 279)

- 7 Back in my lay days, during my job-training as a nurse, I asked my psychology teacher, where wisdom would come into the process of cognition. She hit the roof: “This here is SCIENCE! We are not concerned with wisdom at all!”
- 8 Lad den videnskabeligt Forskende arbejde med rastløs Iver, lad ham endog forkorte sit Liv i Videnskabens begeistrede Tjeneste, lad den Speculerende ikke spare Tid og Flid: de er dog ikke uendeligt personligt i Lidenskab interesserede, tværtimod ville de end ikke være det. Deres Betragtning vil være objektiv, interesseløs. (*Avsluttende uvidenskabelige efterskrift*, p. 14 [20])
- 9 *Clearing the Path*, p. 5
- 10 § 1: Die Welt ist alles, was der Fall ist. § 1.1: Die Welt ist die Gesamtheit der Tatsachen, nicht der Dinge. § 2: Was der Fall ist, die Tatsache, ist das Bestehen von Sachverhalten. (*Logisch-philosophische Abhandlung*.)
- 11 Pubbe c’āhaṃ bhikkhave, etarahi ca dukkhañc’eva paññāpemi, dukkhassa ca nirodhaṃ. (*Alagaddūpama Sutta*, M 22)
 Adhigato kho myāyaṃ dhammo gambhīro duddaso duranubodho santo paṇīto atakkāvacaro nipuṇo paṇḍitavedaniyo. (*Ariyapariyesanā Sutta*, M 26)
- 12 Tutto è menzogna, e delirando io vivo! (*Sogni e favole*, P. Metastasio, 1698–1782)
- 13 *Fragments on Nature and Life*, Maia, p. 348
- 14 विश्वं दर्पणदृश्यमाननगरीतुल्यं Viśvaṃ Darpana-Dṛśyamāna-Nagarī-Tulyaṃ (दक्षिणामूर्ति स्तोत्रम्)
- 15 Ekamantaṃ nisinno kho lokāyatiko brāhmaṇo bhagavantaṃ etadavoca: Kiṃ nu kho, bho gotama, sabbamatthī’ti? – Sabbamatthī’ti kho, brāhmaṇa, jeṭṭhametaṃ lokāyataṃ. – Kiṃ pana, bho gotama, sabbam natthī’ti? – Sabbam natthī’ti kho, brāhmaṇa, dutiyametaṃ lokāyataṃ. ... Ete te, brāhmaṇa, ubho ante anupagamma majjhena tathāgato dhammaṃ deseti. (*Lokāyatika Sutta*, S 12.48)

- 16 Cakkhunā kho, āvuso, lokasmiṃ lokasaññī hoti lokamānī. Sotena ... ghānena ... jivhāya ... kāyena ... manena kho, āvuso, lokasmiṃ lokasaññī hoti lokamānī. Yena kho, āvuso, lokasmiṃ lokasaññī hoti lokamānī – ayaṃ vuccati ariyassa vinaye loko. (*Lokantagama Sutta*, S35.116)
- 17 »Welt« ist ... ein Charakter des Daseins selbst. ... Wenn kein Dasein existiert, ist auch keine Welt »da«. ... Der »Skandal der Philosophie« besteht nicht darin, daß der Beweis für das Vorhandensein »der Dinge außer uns« bislang noch aussteht, sondern darin, daß solche Beweise immer wieder erwartet und versucht werden. (*Sein und Zeit*, p. 64, 365, 205 [92, 417, 249])

A brief explanation of what this all means: “The ‘wherein’ of an act of understanding which assigns or refers itself, is that for which one lets entities be encountered in the kind of Being that belongs to involvements; and this ‘wherein’ is the phenomenon of the world. And the structure of that to which Dasein assigns itself is what makes up the worldhood of the world.” – „Das Worin des sichverweisenden Verstehens als Woraufhin des Begegnenlassens von Seiendem in der Seinsart der Bewandtnis ist das Phänomen der Welt. Und die Struktur dessen, woraufhin das Dasein sich verweist, ist das, was die Weltlichkeit der Welt ausmacht.“ (*Sein und Zeit*, p.86 [119])

- 18 จะพิจารณาในแง่ปัญญาก็ตาม ไม่ห่างเหินจากจิต ย้อนมาในจิตของเรา ยึดไปพิจารณาอะไรก็ตาม ย้อนเข้ามาดูที่จิต คำว่าย้อนเอามา ย้อนเข้ามา มันเป็นคำพูด มันเป็นกิริยา ย้อนความรู้สึกจากอยู่ที่โน้น ย้อนมาอยู่กับผู้รู้ ย้อนมาอยู่ที่จิต (Dhammatalk given on 8th May 2015 at Muttodaya monastery)
- 19 Idha, bhagini, bhikkhu suṇāti: ‘Itthannāmo kira bhikkhu āsavānaṃ khayā anāsavaṃ cetovimuttiṃ paññāvimuttiṃ diṭṭheva dhamme sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharatī’ti. Tassa evaṃ hoti: ‘So hi nāma āyasmā [āsavānaṃ khayā anāsavaṃ cetovimuttiṃ paññāvimuttiṃ diṭṭheva dhamme sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharissati;] kimaṅgaṃ panāhaṇ’ti! So aparena samayena mānaṃ nissāya mānaṃ pajahati. ‘Mānasambhūto ayaṃ, bhagini, kāyo. Mānaṃ nissāya māno pahātabbo’ti. (*Bhikkhuni Sutta*, A 4.159)

- 20 These texts really do exist. The attempt to glean something meaningful about satipaṭṭhāna (as well as other topics) from text-critical analyses and comparative studies fills several volumes of contemporary “Buddhist” literature.

The Buddha taught mindfulness of the breathing often in context with other forms of meditation.

Sometimes it comes at the end, as a summary or essence of what has been said before (e.g. Girimānanda Sutta, A 10.60). In the suttas on satipaṭṭhāna and in the Kāyagatāsati Sutta (M 119) it comes at the beginning. The editors of the Pāli canon, those 500 fully liberated arahants, probably had good reasons for the order of compilation.

One account of the beginning of the Pāli canon, which is based on evidence found within the canon itself, and on sound reasoning, is the essay “*Beginnings: The Pali Suttas*” by Sāmaṇera Bodhesako, published in a collection of his essays titled “*Beginnings*” (Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy 2008). This account encourages trust in the authenticity of the Pāli canon, instead of doubting it based on historical hypotheses.

- 21 Mayampi hi, bhante, gihī odātavaśanā kālena kālaṃ imesu catūsu satipaṭṭhānesu suppaṭiṭṭhitacittā viharāma. (*Kandaraka Sutta*, M 51)

One day Pessa had the idea that instead of training elephants, it would be better to tame himself. He entered the order and became an arahant. In Theragāthā verse 77, he says that the taming of his unsteady heart was like “a trainer bringing an elephant – which had broken loose – to its senses with the help of a goad.”

- 22 Ariyasāvako satimā hoti paramena satinepakkena samannāgato cirakatampi cirabhāsītampi saritā anussaritā. Satidovāriko, bhikkhave, ariyasāvako akusalaṃ pajahati, kusalaṃ bhāveti. (*Nagaropama Sutta*, A 7.67)

- 23 Kāyesu kāyaññatarāhaṃ, bhikkhave, evaṃ vadāmi yadidaṃ assāsapassāsā. (*Ānāpānassati Sutta*, M 118)

- 24 Katamo panāyye, kāyasaṅkhāro ...’ti? – Assāsapassāsā kho, āvuso visākha, kāyasaṅkhāro ...’ti. – Kasmā panāyye, assāsapassāsā kāyasaṅkhāro ...’ti? – Assāsapassāsā kho, āvuso visākha, kāyikā ete dhammā kāyappaṭibaddhā, tasmā assāsapassāsā kāyasaṅkhāro. (*Cūḷavedalla Sutta*, M 44)

- 25 Seyyathāpi, Pahārāda, mahāsamuddo ekaraso loṇaraso; evamevaṃ kho, Pahārāda, ayaṃ dhammavinayo ekaraso, vimuttiraso. (*Pahārāda Sutta*, A 8.19)
- 26 Biology, the science of life, seems to be more concerned with dead bodies. A friend of mine told me that during her studies she had to take the life of more than 10,000 caddis fly larvae in order to study it.
- 27 Cha, bhikkhave, dhamme appahāya abhabbo ajjhataṃ kāye kāyānupassī viharituṃ, bahiddhā vā kāye kāyānupassī viharituṃ, ajjhata-bahiddhā vā kāye kāyānupassī viharituṃ. Katame cha? Kammārāmatā, bhassārāmatā, niddārāmatā, saṅgaṇikārāmatā, indriyesu aguttadvāratā, bhojane amattaññutā. (*Dhammānupassī Sutta*, A 6.118)
- 28 In the context of the sense domains, in the suttas the word *ajjhaticabāhira* is being used. It has the same meaning and word origin as *ajjhatabhiddha*. However, we cannot fully apply this classification of “internal” and “external” – as signifying the internal and external domains – to the other three application bases of mindfulness. But by making use of this specific idea *now* when dealing with the body, we will have acquired a taste for what “internally and externally” means in a higher, more general sense, that can be applied in the context of contemplating feelings, heart, and things – once we get there.
- 29 Ye te, bhikkhave, bhikkhū navā acirapabbajitā adhunāgatā imaṃ dhammavinayaṃ, te vo, bhikkhave, bhikkhū catunnaṃ satipaṭṭhānānaṃ bhāvanāya samādapetabbā nivesetabbā patiṭṭhāpetabbā: Etha tumhe, āvuso, kāye kāyānupassino viharatha ... vedanāsu vedanānupassino ... citte cittānupassino ... dhammesu dhammānupassino viharatha ātāpino sampajānā ekodibhūtā vipasannacittā samāhitā ekaggacittā, kāyassa ... vedanānaṃ ... cittassa ... dhammānaṃ yathābhūtaṃ ñāṇāya. (*Sāla Sutta*, S 47.4)
- 30 Kathaṃ pana, bhante, jānato kathaṃ passato imasmiṃca saviññāṇake kāye bahiddhā ca sabbanimittesu *ahamkāramamaṃkāra*-mānānusayā na honti’ti? (*Mahāpuṇṇama Sutta*, M 109)
- 31 Kāyaṃ, āvuso sārīputta, kāyaviññāṇaṃ kāyaviññāṇaviññātabbe dhamme ‘netāṃ mama, nesohamasmi, na meso attā’ti samanupassāmi. (*Channovāda Sutta*, M 144)

- 32 Cattārome, bhikkhave, satipaṭṭhānā *bhāvitā* bahulikatā ekantanibbidāya virāgāya nirodhāya upasamāya abhiññāya sambodhāya nibbānāya saṁvattanti. (*Virāga Sutta*, S 47.32)
- 33 Idam kho pana bhikkhave dukkhasamudayo ariyasaccam: Yāyam taṇhā ponobbhavikā nandirāgasahagatā tatra tatrābhinandini. Seyyathidam: Kāmatanṇhā bhavatanṇhā vibhavatanṇhā. (*Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*, S 56.11)

- 34 Hätte ich keinen Leib, wäre mir nicht mein Leib, mein empirisches Ich gegeben, so könnte ich also keinen anderen Leib, keinen anderen Menschen „sehen“. Fremden Leib kann ich nur erfassen in der Interpretation eines dem meinen ähnlichen Leibkörpers als Leibes und damit als Trägers eines Ich (eines dem meinen ähnlichen).

(Edmund Husserl wrote about 120,000 pages. His collected writings are published as *Husserliana* in 42 volumes. This quote is from vol. XIII, p. 267.)

- 35 (Full quote:) It has become clear, in principle, that ontologically care is not to be derived from Reality or to be built up with the categories of Reality. Care already harbours in itself the phenomenon of the Self, if indeed the thesis is correct that the expression “care for oneself”, would be tautological if it were proposed in conformity with the term “solicitude” as care for Others. But in that case the problem of defining ontologically the Selfhood of Dasein gets sharpened to the question of the existential “connection” between care and Selfhood. To clarify the existentiality of the Self, we take as our “natural” point of departure Dasein’s everyday interpretation of the Self. In saying “I”, Dasein expresses itself about “itself”. It is not necessary that in doing so Dasein should make any utterance. With the “I”, this entity has itself in view. The content of this expression is regarded as something utterly simple. In each case, it just stands for me and nothing further. Also, this “I”, as something simple, is not an attribute of other Things; it is not itself a predicate, but the absolute “subject”. What is expressed and what is addressed in saying “I”, is always met as the same persisting something.

Grundsätzlich wurde klar: die Sorge ist ontologisch nicht aus Realität abzuleiten oder mit Kategorien der Realität aufzubauen. Die Sorge birgt schon das Phänomen des Selbst in sich, wenn anders die These zurecht besteht, der Ausdruck »Selbst-sorge« in Anmessung an Fürsorge als

Sorge für Andere sei eine Tautologie. Dann verschärft sich aber das Problem der ontologischen Bestimmung der Selbstheit des Daseins zur Frage nach dem existenzialen »Zusammenhang« zwischen Sorge und Selbstheit. Die Aufklärung der Existenzialität des Selbst nimmt ihren »natürlichen« Ausgang von der alltäglichen Selbstausslegung des Daseins, das sich über »sich selbst« ausspricht im Ich-sagen. Eine Verlautbarung ist dabei nicht notwendig. Mit »Ich« meint dieses Seiende sich selbst. Der Gehalt dieses Ausdrucks gilt als schlechthin einfach. Er meint je nur mich und nichts weiter. Als dieses Einfache ist das »Ich« auch keine Bestimmung anderer Dinge, selbst nicht Prädikat, sondern das absolute »Subjekt«. Das im Ich-sagen Aus- und Angesprochene wird immer als dasselbe sich Durchhaltende angetroffen. (*Sein und Zeit*, S.318 [366])

- 36 Celui qui réfléchit sur moi ... c'est moi, moi qui dure, engagé dans le circuit de mon ipséité, en danger dans le monde, avec mon historicité. Simplement, cette historicité et cet être dans le monde et ce circuit d'ipséité, le pour-soi que je suis les vit sur le mode du dédoublement réflexif. (*L'être et le néant*, p.188 [151])

- 37 Heidegger wonders after more than 400 pages of high class analysis of Dasein:

“And can we even *seek* the answer as long as the *question* of the meaning of Being remains unformulated and unclarified?” – „Läßt sich die Antwort auch nur *suchen*, so lange die *Frage* nach dem Sinn des Seins überhaupt ungestellt und ungeklärt bleibt?“ (*op.cit.*, p.437 [487])

He wanted to ask the question in a follow-up volume for which he had already written an outline. It seems that he realised that his project was doomed to failure: Volume Two was never written.

- 38 Ālayarāmā kho panāyaṃ pajā ālayaratāya ālayasammuditāya duddasaṃ idaṃ tñānaṃ yadidaṃ – idappaccayatā paṭiccasamuppādo. (*Ariya-pariyesanā Sutta*, M26)
- 39 Katamañca, bhikkhave, dukkhasamudayaṃ ariyasaccaṃ? Avijjāpaccayā saṅkhārā ... taṇhāpaccayā upādānaṃ, upādānapaccayā bhavo ... Evametassa kevalassa dukkhakkhandhassa samudayo hoti. Idaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, dukkhasamudayaṃ ariyasaccaṃ. (*Titthāyatanādi Sutta* A3.62; the full quote will follow later.)

- 40 Yepi te, bhikkhave, bhikkhū sekhā appattamānasā anuttaraṃ yogakkhemaṃ patthayamānā viharanti, tepi kāye kāyānupassino viharanti ... vedanāsu vedanānupassino viharanti ... citte cittānupassino viharanti ... dhammesu dhammānupassino viharanti ātāpino sampajānā ekodibhūtā vippasannacittā samāhitā ekaggacittā, kāyassa ... vedanānaṃ ... cittassa ... dhammānaṃ *pariññāya*. (*Sāla Sutta*, S 47. 4)

The term *yogakkhema*, literally: “yoke-safety”, could also be understood as meaning “safety after the yoke of practice (yoga)”. In Vedic thinking the word was used in that way. But a re-definition of Vedic terms by the Buddha is generally not to be ruled out.

- 41 Katamañ ca bhikkhave *bhāvanābalaṃ*? Tatra bhikkhave yaṃ idaṃ bhāvanābalaṃ sekhānaṃ etaṃ balaṃ. (A 2. 11)
- 42 Katamā ca, bhikkhave, satipaṭṭhāna-*bhāvanā*? Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu *samudayadhammānupassī* kāyasmīṃ viharati, vayadhammānupassī kāyasmīṃ viharati, samudayavayadhammānupassī kāyasmīṃ viharati ... Ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, satipaṭṭhānabhāvanā. Katamā ca, bhikkhave, satipaṭṭhānabhāvanāgāminī paṭipadā? Ayameva ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo, seyyathidaṃ – sammādiṭṭhi, sammāsaṅkappo, sammāvācā, sammākammanto, sammāājīvo, sammāvāyāmo, sammāsati, sammāsamādhi. (*Vibhaṅga Sutta*, S 47. 40)
- 43 Yopi so, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sekkho appattamānaso anuttaraṃ yogakkhemaṃ patthayamāno viharati, sopi ... sabbaṃ me’ti mā maññi, sabbaṃ mābhinandi. Taṃ kissa hetu? *Pariññeyyaṃ* tassā’ti vadāmi. (*Mūlapariyāya Sutta*, M 1)
- 44 So micchādiṭṭhiyā pahānāya vāyamati, sammādiṭṭhiyā upasampadāya. Svāssa hoti sammāvāyāmo. So sato micchādiṭṭhiṃ pajahati, sato sammādiṭṭhiṃ upasampajja viharati. Sāssa hoti sammāsati. Itiyime tayo dhammā sammādiṭṭhiṃ anuparidhāvanti anuparivattanti, seyyathidaṃ – sammādiṭṭhi, sammāvāyāmo, sammāsati. (*Mahācattārisaka Sutta*, M 117)
- 45 Tasmimīyeva āsane virajaṃ vītamalaṃ dhammacakkhuṃ udapādi – ‘Yaṃ kiñci samudayadhammaṃ sabbaṃ taṃ nirodhadhammaṃ’ti. (*Upāli Sutta*, M 56)

- 46 Na so rajjati dhammesu, dhammañ ñatvā paṭissato. / Virattacitto vedeti, tañca nājjhosa tiṭṭhati. / Yathāssa jānato dhammañ, sevato cāpi vedanañ. / Khīyati nopacīyati, evaṃ so caratī sato. / Evaṃ apacinato dukkhañ, santike nibbānamuccatī'ti. (*Māluṅkyaputta Sutta*, S 35. 95)
- 47 Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhiññādomanassañ. Tassa kāye kāyānupassino viharato kāyo pariññāto hoti. Kāyassa pariññātattā amatañ sacchikatam hoti. (*Pariññāta Sutta*, S 47. 38)
- 48 Yopi so, bhikkhave, bhikkhu araham khīṇāsavo vusitavā katakaraṇīyo ohitabhāro anupattasadattho parikkhīṇabhavasamiyojano sammadaññā vimutto, sopi ... sabbañ me'ti na maññati, sabbañ nābhinandati. Tañ kissa hetu? *Pariññātam* tassā'ti vadāmi. (*Mūlapariyāya Sutta*, M 1)
- 49 Yepi te, bhikkhave, bhikkhū arahanto khīṇāsavā vusitavanto katakaraṇīyā ohitabhārā anupattasadatthā parikkhīṇabhavasamiyojanā sammadaññā vimuttā, tepi kāye kāyānupassino viharanti ātāpino sampajānā ekodibhūtā vipasannacittā samāhitā ekaggacittā, kāyena ... vedanāhi ... cittaena ... dhammehi *visaṃyuttā*. (*Sāla Sutta*, S 47. 4)
- 50 Natthi, khvāvuso, arahato uttari karaṇīyañ katassa vā paticayo; api ca ime dhammā bhāvitā bahulikatā diṭṭhadhammasukhavihārā ceva saṃvattanti satisampajāññā cā'ti. (*Sīlavanta Sutta*, S 22. 122)
- 51 Pañcimāni, āvuso, indriyāni nānāvisayāni nānāgocarāni, na añña-maññaassa gocaravisayañ paccanubhonti, seyyathidañ – cakkhundriyañ, sotindriyañ, ghānindriyañ, jivhindriyañ, kāyindriyañ. Imesañ kho, āvuso, pañcannañ indriyānañ nānāvisayānañ nānāgocarānañ, na aññamaññaassa gocaravisayañ paccanubhontānañ, mano paṭisaraṇañ, mano ca nesañ gocaravisayañ paccanubhoti'ti. (*Mahāvedalla Sutta*, M 4)
- 52 Asubhānupassīnañ, bhikkhave, kāyasmiñ viharatañ yo subhāya dhātuyā rāgānusayo so pahīyati. Ānāpānassatiyā ajjhattañ parimukhañ sūpaṭṭhititāya ye bāhirā vitakkāsaya vighātapakkhikā, te na honti ...
- Asubhānupassī kāyasmiñ / ānāpāne paṭissato / sabbasaṅkhārasamathā / passam ātāpi sabbadā. (*Asubhānupassī Sutta*, Iti 85)
- 53 La nature même de notre être répugne à ce qui a des parties et des successions. (*Absolu et Choix*, p. 44 [44])

54 父母未詳以前の本来の面目 如何

55 Katamā ca, bhikkhu, pathaviḍhātu? Pathaviḍhātu siyā ajjhattikā siyā bāhirā. Katamā ca, bhikkhu, ajjhattikā pathaviḍhātu? Yaṃ ajjhattaṃ paccattaṃ kakkhaḷaṃ kharigataṃ upādinnaṃ, seyyathidaṃ – kesā lomā nakhā dantā taco maṇisaṃ nhāru aṭṭhi aṭṭhimiññaṃ vakkāṃ hadayaṃ yakanāṃ kilomakāṃ pihakāṃ papphāsāṃ antaṃ antaguṇaṃ udariyaṃ karisaṃ, yaṃ vā panaññāmpi kiñci ajjhattaṃ paccattaṃ kakkhaḷaṃ kharigataṃ upādinnaṃ – ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhu, ajjhattikā pathaviḍhātu. Yā ceva kho pana ajjhattikā pathaviḍhātu yā ca bāhirā pathaviḍhātu pathaviḍhātūrevesā. Taṃ ‘netāṃ mama nesohamasmi na meso attā’ti – evametaṃ yathābhūtaṃ sammappaññāya daṭṭhabbaṃ.

Evametaṃ yathābhūtaṃ sammappaññāya disvā pathaviḍhātuyā nibbin-dati, pathaviḍhātuyā cittaṃ virājeti. (*Dhātuvibhaṅga Sutta*, M 140)

56 เป็นของจริงขนาดไหนล่ะ จริตตามฐานะแต่ละชั้นแต่ละชั้น เช่น หนังสือจริงตามฐานะของหนังสือก็จริงตามฐานะของเนื้อ เอ็นก็จริงตามฐานะของเอ็น กระดุกก็จริงตามฐานะของกระดุก เป็นต้น (พระหล้า เขมปตฺโต, หน้า ๘๒ [At the time of writing of *this* book the English translation of Ven. Lā’s autobiography has not been printed yet. Therefore the page numbers may be subject to change: 116])

57 *Clearing the Path*, p. 274

58 Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhuno papañcanirodhe cittaṃ pakkhandati paṣīdati santiṭṭhati vimuccati. ‘Nippapañcārāmassāyaṃ, bhikkhave, dhammo, nippapañcaratino, nāyaṃ dhammo papañcārāmassa papañcaratino’ti, iti yaṃ taṃ vuttaṃ idametaṃ paṭicca vuttan’ti. (*Anuruddha-mahāvitakka Sutta*, A 8.30)

59 Die Öffentlichkeit des alltäglichen Miteinander »kennt« den Tod als ständig vorkommendes Begegnis, als »Todesfall«. Dieser oder jener Nächste oder Fernerstehende »stirbt«. Unbekannte »sterben« täglich und stündlich. »Der Tod« begegnet als bekanntes innerweltlich vorkommendes Ereignis. Als solches bleibt er in der für das alltäglich Begegnende charakteristischen Unauffälligkeit. Das Man hat für dieses Ereignis auch schon eine Auslegung gesichert. Die ausgesprochene oder auch meist verhaltene »flüchtige« Rede darüber will sagen: man stirbt am Ende auch einmal, aber zunächst bleibt man selbst unbetroffen.

[Der Tod] wird in solcher Rede verstanden als ein unbestimmtes Etwas, das allererst irgendwoher eintreffen muß, zunächst aber für einen selbst noch nicht vorhanden und daher unbedrohlich ist. Das »man stirbt« verbreitet die Meinung, der Tod treffe gleichsam das Man. Die öffentliche Daseinsauslegung sagt: »man stirbt«, weil damit jeder andere und man selbst sich einreden kann: je nicht gerade ich; denn dieses Man ist das Niemand.

Das Man setzt sich aber zugleich mit dieser das Dasein von seinem Tod abdrängenden Beruhigung in Recht und Ansehen durch die stillschweigende Regelung der Art, wie man sich überhaupt zum Tode zu verhalten hat. Schon das »Denken an den Tod« gilt öffentlich als feige Furcht, Unsicherheit des Daseins und finstere Weltflucht. *Das Man läßt den Mut zur Angst vor dem Tode nicht aufkommen.* (*Sein und Zeit*, S.252 ff. [296 ff.]; emphasis by Martin Heidegger.)

- 60 Das Man ist überall dabei, doch so, daß es sich auch schon immer davongeschlichen hat, wo das Dasein auf Entscheidung drängt. Weil das Man jedoch alles Urteilen und Entscheiden vorgibt, nimmt es dem jeweiligen Dasein die Verantwortlichkeit ab. Das Man kann es sich gleichsam leisten, daß »man« sich ständig auf es beruft. Es kann am leichtesten alles verantworten, weil keiner es ist, der für etwas einzustehen braucht. Das Man »war« es immer und doch kann gesagt werden, »keiner« ist es gewesen. (*Sein und Zeit*, p.127 [165]).

The quote that follows has been abridged in the main text:

Furthermore, the “they” is not something like a ‘universal subject’ which a plurality of subjects have hovering above them. One can come to take it this way only if the Being of such ‘subjects’ is understood as having a character other than that of Dasein, and if these are regarded as cases of a genus of occurrents-cases which are factually present-at-hand. With this approach, the only possibility ontologically is that everything which is not a case of this sort is to be understood in the sense of genus and species. The “they” is not the genus to which the individual Dasein belongs, nor can we come across it in such entities as an abiding characteristic. That even the traditional logic fails us when confronted with these phenomena, is not surprising if we bear in mind that it has its foundation in an ontology of the present-at-hand – an ontology which, moreover, is still a rough one. So no matter in how many ways this logic may be improved and expanded, it cannot in

principle be made any more flexible. Such reforms of logic, oriented towards the 'humane sciences', only increase the ontological confusion.

The "they" is an existentiale; and as a primordial phenomenon, it belongs to Dasein's positive constitution.

Das Man ist auch nicht so etwas wie ein »allgemeines Subjekt«, das über mehreren schwebt. Zu dieser Auffassung kann es nur kommen, wenn das Sein der »Subjekte« nicht daseinsmäßig verstanden wird und diese als tatsächlich vorhandene Fälle einer vorkommenden Gattung angesetzt werden. Bei diesem Ansatz besteht ontologisch nur die Möglichkeit, alles was nicht Fall ist, im Sinne der Art und Gattung zu verstehen. Das Man ist nicht die Gattung des jeweiligen Daseins und es läßt sich auch nicht als bleibende Beschaffenheit an diesem Seienden vorfinden.

Daß auch die traditionelle Logik angesichts dieser Phänomene versagt, kann nicht verwundern, wenn bedacht wird, daß sie ihr Fundament in einer überdies noch rohen Ontologie des Vorhandenen hat. Daher ist sie durch noch so viele Verbesserungen und Erweiterungen grundsätzlich nicht geschmeidiger zu machen. Diese »geisteswissenschaftlich« orientierten Reformen der Logik steigern nur die ontologische Verwirrung.

Das Man ist ein Existenzial und gehört als ursprüngliches Phänomen zur positiven Verfassung des Daseins. (Sein und Zeit, S. 128f [166f.]; emphasis by Martin Heidegger.)

For our investigation using the *levels of experience* structure, the meaning here is that the "they" is not a category more general than the individual. But rather that the individual is more general than the "they", because the "they" is a state of the individual, namely, a life in inauthenticity, which is conditioned by the individual itself. (*Heidegger in my simple words*)

- 61 The Buddha teaches further antidotes, e.g. considering that death can come even before the next in-breath or out-breath. (See A 8.73)
- 62 Aniccasaññaṃ, rāhula, bhāvanāṃ bhāvehi. Aniccasaññaṃhi te, rāhula, bhāvanāṃ bhāvayato yo asmimāno so pahīyissati. (*Mahārāhulovāda Sutta*, M 62)
- 63 Yasmiṃ samaye, bhikkhave, bhikkhu 'pītipatisaṃvedī assasissāmi'ti sikkhati, 'pītipatisaṃvedī passasissāmi'ti sikkhati; 'sukhapatisaṃvedī

assasissāmi'ti sikkhati, 'sukhapaṭisaṃvedi passasissāmi'ti sikkhati; 'cittasaṅkhārapaṭisaṃvedi assasissāmi'ti sikkhati, 'cittasaṅkhārapaṭisaṃvedi passasissāmi'ti sikkhati; 'passambhayaṃ cittasaṅkhāraṃ assasissāmi'ti sikkhati, 'passambhayaṃ cittasaṅkhāraṃ passasissāmi'ti sikkhati; vedanāsu vedanānupassī, bhikkhave, tasmim samaye bhikkhu viharati ... Vedanāsu vedanāññatarāhaṃ, bhikkhave, evaṃ vadāmi yadidaṃ – assāsapassāsānaṃ sādhukaṃ manasikāraṃ. Tasmātiha, bhikkhave, vedanāsu vedanānupassī tasmim samaye bhikkhu viharati ... (*Ānāpānassati Sutta*, M 118)

64 *Mind Is What Matters*, p. 24

65 Yato kho te, bāhiya, diṭṭhe diṭṭhamattaṃ bhavissati, sute sutamattaṃ bhavissati, mute mutamattaṃ bhavissati, viññāte viññātamattaṃ bhavissati, tato tvaṃ, bāhiya, na tena; yato tvaṃ, bāhiya, na tena tato tvaṃ, bāhiya, na tattha; yato tvaṃ, bāhiya, na tattha, tato tvaṃ, bāhiya, nevidha na hurāṃ na ubhayamantarena. Esevanto dukkhassā'ti. (*Bāhiya Sutta*, Ud 10)

66 These are the four stages of the development of the noble eightfold path. They are accompanied by increasing freedom from the fetters of existence. The arahant has destroyed all fetters and attained complete liberation. The goal of the path has been reached.

67 Yassa kassaci, bhikkhave, mahāsamuddo cetasā phuṭo antogadhā tassa kunnadiyo yā kāci samuddaṅgamā; evamevaṃ, bhikkhave, yassa kassaci kāyagatā sati bhāvitā bahulikatā antogadhā tassa kusalā dhammā ye keci vijjābhāgiyā.

Ekadhammo, bhikkhave, bhāvito bahulikato paññāpabhedāya saṃvattati ... anupādāparinibbānāya saṃvattati ... Ekadhamme, bhikkhave, bhāvite bahulikate anekadhātupaṭivedho hoti ... nānādhātupaṭivedho hoti ... anekadhātupaṭisaṃbhidaṃ hoti ... Ekadhammo, bhikkhave, bhāvito bahulikato sotāpattiṃ phalasacchikiriyāya saṃvattati ... sakadāgāmiṃ phalasacchikiriyāya saṃvattati ... anāgāmiṃ phalasacchikiriyāya saṃvattati ... arahattaphalasacchikiriyāya saṃvattati. Katamo eka-dhammo? Kāyagatā sati. (*Ekadhammapāli*, *Kāyagatāsati Vaggo*, A 1.?)

- 68 The question-mark represents the number of the discourse. On the 6th council (Burma 1957) the conciliators, obsessed by a certain fixed idea, “reconfigured” the numbering of the discourses. This affected (or afflicted) in particular the collection of numerical discourses. Therefore it is hard to tell if this sutta is No. 19 or No. 32 or No. 563 + No. 575–583.
- 69 Yattha kho, āvuso, na jāyati na jiyati na miyati na cavati na upapajjati, nāhaṃ taṃ gamanena lokassa antaṃ nāteyyaṃ daṭṭheyyaṃ patteyyaṃ’ti vadāmi. Na cāhaṃ, āvuso, appatvāva lokassa antaṃ dukkhassa antakiriyaṃ vadāmi. Api cāhaṃ, āvuso, imasmiṃyeva byāmaṃmatte kalevare sasaññimhi samanake lokaṇca paññāpemi lokasamudayaṇca lokanirodhaṇca lokanirodhagāminiṇca paṭipadaṇ’ti. (*Rohitassa Sutta*, A 4.45)
- 70 Yasmiṃ samaye, bhikkhave, bhikkhu ‘cittapaṭisaṃvedī assasissāmi’ti sikkhati, ‘cittapaṭisaṃvedī passasissāmi’ti sikkhati; ‘abhippamodayaṃ cittaṃ assasissāmi’ti sikkhati, ‘abhippamodayaṃ cittaṃ passasissāmi’ti sikkhati; ‘samādahāṃ cittaṃ assasissāmi’ti sikkhati, ‘samādahāṃ cittaṃ passasissāmi’ti sikkhati; ‘vimocayaṃ cittaṃ assasissāmi’ti sikkhati, ‘vimocayaṃ cittaṃ passasissāmi’ti sikkhati; citte cittānupassī, bhikkhave, tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhu viharati ...
- Nāhaṃ, bhikkhave, muṭṭhassatissa asampajānassa ānāpānassatiṃ vadāmi. Tasmātiha, bhikkhave, citte cittānupassī tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhu viharati. (*Ānāpānassati Sutta*, M 118)
- 71 Sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā’ti. Yadā paññāya passati, atha nibbindati dukkhe. Esa maggo visuddhiyā. (*Dhp 277*)
- 72 Tīṇ’imāni bhikkhave saṅkhatassa saṅkhatalakkaṇāni. Katamāni tīṇi. Uppādo paññāyati, vayo paññāyati, ṭhitassa aññathattaṃ paññāyati. Imāni kho bhikkhave tīṇi saṅkhatassa saṅkhatalakkaṇāni ti. (*Saṅkhatalakkaṇa Sutta*, A 3.47)
- 73 *Beginnings*, p. 70
- 74 *Beginnings*, p. 70f.
- 75 Tayo’me bhikkhave addhā. Katame tayo. Atīto addhā, anagato addhā, paccuppanno addhā. Ime kho bhikkhave tayo addhā ti. (*Addhā Sutta*, Iti 63)

- 76 บุคคลไม่เห็นกองทุกข์ชัดด้วยตนเองในปัจจุบัน อดีต อนาคต ให้เสมอภาคด้วยตนเองชัดแล้ว โฉนความเพลินในสงสารจึงจะลดลงได้

อดีตอนาคตทางพระพุทธศาสนา ไม่ใช่จะเป็นของไม่มีค่าเหลือจึงไปหมดโดยส่วนเดียว อดีตที่เป็นประโยชน์ก็จะได้อามาเป็นเยี่ยงอย่างในทางดี ที่ไม่เป็นประโยชน์ก็จะได้ขีดหลาบไว้ แม้อนาคตที่ตั้งสยัไว้ สิ่งที่เป็นประโยชน์ก็จะได้เตรียมรักษาไว้ สิ่งที่ไม่เป็นประโยชน์ก็จะได้เว้น เช่น เราเดินทาง แม้เราจะยังไม่ก้าวไปถึงก็ตาม ก็ต้องเห็นที่ก้าวที่จะเหยียบล่วงหน้าก่อนก้าวไป (พระหล้า เขมปัตโต, หน้า ๑๐๔-๑๐๕ [142])

- 77 *Beginnings*, S. 69f.

- 78 Yaṃ kiñci bhūtaṃ saṅkhataṃ cetayitaṃ paṭiccasamuppannaṃ, tad-aniccaṃ; yadaniccaṃ taṃ dukkhaṃ; yaṃ dukkhaṃ taṃ n'etaṃ mama n'eso 'hamasmi na m'eso attā'ti: evameva yathābhūtaṃ sammappaññāya sudiṭṭhaṃ. (*Kimdiṭṭhika Sutta*, A 10. 93)

- 79 It is striking that meditation systems based on scientific thinking are more widely spread in certain countries. A scholarly examination of this phenomenon suggests that Western thinking has influenced the approach to the Buddha's teaching in colonised countries like Sri Lanka and Burma in the wake of colonialism. Quote:

One of the most influential figures in this project, popularizing meditation among both monastics and laypeople, was the Burmese monk Ledi Sayadaw (1846–1923). His mentor, who influenced both his clear writing style and his treatment of Buddhism as a scientific enterprise, was King Mindon's minister Hpo Hlaing (1830–1883). Hpo Hlaing had an avid interest in European scientific works ... The meditation techniques that first developed out of these influences – spreading first to the rest of the region, then worldwide during the twentieth century – were therefore informed by contemporary cosmopolitan learning ... (Kate Crosby, *Esoteric Theravada*, p. 20, Shambala 2020)

- 80 Yasmiṃ samaye, bhikkhave, bhikkhu 'aniccānupassī assasissāmi'ti sikkhati, 'aniccānupassī passasissāmi'ti sikkhati; 'virāgānupassī assasissāmi'ti sikkhati, 'virāgānupassī passasissāmi'ti sikkhati; 'nirodhānupassī assasissāmi'ti sikkhati, 'nirodhānupassī passasissāmi'ti sikkhati; 'paṭinissaggānupassī assasissāmi'ti sikkhati, 'paṭinissaggānupassī passasissāmi'ti sikkhati; dhammesu dhammānupassī, bhikkhave, tasmīṃ

samaye bhikkhu viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ. So yaṃ taṃ abhijjhādomanassānaṃ pahānaṃ taṃ paññāya disvā sādhukaṃ ajjhupekkhitā hoti.

Tasmātiha, bhikkhave, dhammesu dhammānupassī tasmim samaye bhikkhu viharati ... (*Ānāpānassati Sutta*, M 118)

- 81 Manasikārasamudayā dhammānaṃ samudayo; manasikāranirodhā dhammānaṃ atthaṅgamo. (*Samudaya Sutta*, S 47.42)
- 82 Kittāvatā pana, bhante, khandhānaṃ khandhādhivacanaṃ hoti'ti? – Yaṃ kiñci, bhikkhu, rūpaṃ, atītānāgatapaccuppannaṃ ajjhattaṃ vā bahiddhā vā, oḷārikaṃ vā sukhumaṃ vā, hīnaṃ vā paṇītaṃ vā, yaṃ dūre santike vā, ayaṃ rūpakkhando. ... pe ... Ettāvatā kho, bhikkhu, khandhānaṃ khandhādhivacanaṃ hoti'ti. (*Mahāpuṇṇama Sutta*, M 109)
- 83 *Clearing the Path*, p. 66
- 84 Seyyathāpi, bhikkhave, appamattakopi gūtho duggandho hoti; evamevaṃ kho ahaṃ, bhikkhave, appamattakampi bhavaṃ na vaṇṇemi, antamaso accharāsaṅghātamattampi. (*Ekadhammapāli*, 3. Vaggo, A 1.?)
- 85 Cattāro kho, bhikkhu, mahābhūtā hetu, cattāro mahābhūtā paccayo rūpakkhandhassa paññāpanāya. Phasso hetu, phasso paccayo vedanākkhandhassa paññāpanāya. Phasso hetu, phasso paccayo saññākkhandhassa paññāpanāya. Phasso hetu, phasso paccayo saṅkhārakkhandhassa paññāpanāya. Nāmarūpaṃ kho, bhikkhu, hetu, nāmarūpaṃ paccayo viññāṇakkhandhassa paññāpanāya. (*Mahāpuṇṇama Sutta*, M 109)
- 86 Cattāri ca mahābhūtāni, catunnaṃca mahābhūtānaṃ upādāyarūpaṃ – idaṃ vuccatāvuso, rūpaṃ. (*Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta*, M 9)
- 87 Yato ca kho, āvuso, ajjhattiko ceva mano aparibhinno hoti, bāhirā ca dhammā āpāthaṃ āgacchanti, tajjo ca samannāhāro hoti, evaṃ tajjassa viññāṇabhāgassa pātubhāvo hoti. Yaṃ tathābhūtassa rūpaṃ taṃ rūpupādānakkhandhe saṅghaṃ gacchati. (*Mahāhatthipadopama Sutta*, M 28)

- 88 C'est seulement dans le monde humain qu'il peut y avoir des manques. Un manque suppose une trinité : ce qui manque ou manquant, ce à quoi manque ce qui manque ou existant, et une totalité qui a été désagrégée par le manque et qui serait restaurée par la synthèse du manquant et de l'existant: c'est le manqué. ... La réalité-humaine, par quoi le manque apparaît dans le monde, doit être elle-même un manque. (*L'être et le néant*, p. 122 f. [105])
- 89 L'obscénité du sexe féminin est celle de toute chose *béante*; c'est un *appel d'être*, comme d'ailleurs tous les trous; en soi la femme appelle une chair étrangère qui doive la transformer en plénitude d'être par pénétration et dilution. (*L'être et le néant*, p. 660 [466] I did not dare to give the full quote here. Interested readers who do not understand French are referred to the translation available on the book market.)
- 90 Kiñca, bhikkhave, saññaṃ vadetha? Sañjānāti kho, bhikkhave, tasmā 'saññā'ti vuccati. Kiñca sañjānāti? Nīlampi sañjānāti, pītakampi sañjānāti, lohītakampi sañjānāti, odātampi sañjānāti. (*Khajjanīya Sutta*, S 22.79)
- 91 Kiñca, bhikkhave, saṅkhāre vadetha? Saṅkhatamabhisāṅkharontī kho, bhikkhave, tasmā 'saṅkhārā'ti vuccati. Kiñca saṅkhatamabhisāṅkharontī? Rūpaṃ rūpattāya saṅkhatamabhisāṅkharontī, vedanaṃ vedanattāya saṅkhatamabhisāṅkharontī, saññaṃ saññattāya saṅkhatamabhisāṅkharontī, saṅkhāre saṅkhārattāya saṅkhatamabhisāṅkharontī, viññāṇaṃ viññāṇattāya saṅkhatamabhisāṅkharontī. (*Khajjanīya Sutta*, S 22.79)

The phenomenologically uninstructed ordinary reader might prefer the simplified translation: “They determine form as form, feeling as feeling, perception as perception, determinations as determinations, consciousness as consciousness.” But why should we sacrifice precision for the sake of linguistic pleasingness?

Translators and interpreters with a scholarly background have a hard time with this passage and have to forge it quite a bit to make it fit into their world-view: “‘They construct the conditioned,’ therefore they are called volitional formations.” Each to their own ... which is another example of determinations.

- 92 Posséder, c'est *avoir à moi*, c'est-à-dire être la fin propre de l'existence de l'objet. Si la possession est entièrement et concrètement donnée, le possédant est la *raison d'être* de l'objet possédé. (*L'être et le néant*, p. 635 [449])

The translation of *raison d'être* as “ground of being” may be ambiguous – “reason, justification” versus “background, basis”, but phenomenologically seen both meanings are the same anyway: a condition on a higher level.

- 93 Idha, bhikkhave, assutavā puthujjano ariyānaṃ adassāvī ariya-dhammassa akovido ariyadhamme avinīto, sappurisānaṃ adassāvī sappurisdhammassa akovido sappurisdhamme avinīto, rūpaṃ 'etaṃ mama, esohamasmi, eso me attā'ti samanupassati; vedanaṃ ... saññaṃ ... saṅkhāre ... yampi taṃ diṭṭhaṃ sutāṃ mutāṃ viññātāṃ pattāṃ pariyesiṭāṃ, anuvicaritaṃ manasā tampi 'etaṃ mama, esohamasmi, eso me attā'ti samanupassati. (*Alagaddūpama Sutta*, M22)
- 94 Sutavā ca kho, bhikkhave, ariyasāvako ariyānaṃ dassāvī ariyadhammassa kovido ariyadhamme suvinīto, sappurisānaṃ dassāvī sappurisdhammassa kovido sappurisdhamme suvinīto, rūpaṃ 'netāṃ mama, nesohamasmi, na meso attā'ti samanupassati; vedanaṃ ... saññaṃ ... saṅkhāre ... yampi taṃ diṭṭhaṃ sutāṃ mutāṃ viññātāṃ pattāṃ pariyesiṭāṃ, anuvicaritaṃ manasā tampi 'netāṃ mama, nesohamasmi, na meso attā'ti samanupassati. (*ibid.*)
- 95 Anglophone translators may be forgiven. In English there is no difference between “this” (neuter; Pāli: *etaṃ*; German: *dieses*) and “this” (masculine/feminine; Pāli: *eso/esā*; German: *dieser/diese*).
- Regrettably much of the literature on Dhamma is only available in English. There are even native German speakers who prefer to write their books in English. Worldwide the English language has a considerable influence on how the Dhamma is understood.
- 96 Attani vā, bhikkhave, sati attaniyaṃ me ti assā'ti? – Evaṃ, bhante. – Attaniye vā, bhikkhave, sati attā me ti assā'ti? – Evaṃ, bhante. (*ibid.*)

- 97 Readers who have paid close attention will notice the contradiction between “mine” and “ground of being”. The same contradiction is found in the constantly “flipping over” idea of God (if one has any). On one hand God is the eternal “purpose of my life”, my “Lord”, creator and owner. On the other hand he is “my” God, a temporal, personal father figure – my possession. Simply a typical determination!
- 98 Vedanā, saññā, cetanā, phasso, manasikāro – idaṃ vuccatāvuso, nāmaṃ. (*Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta*, M 9)
- 99 Yehi Ānanda ākārehi yehi liṅgehi yehi nimittehi yehi uddesehi rūpākāyassa paññatti hoti, tesu ākāresu tesu liṅgesu tesu nimittesu tesu uddesesu asati, api nu kho nāmakāye paṭighasamphasso paññāyethā’ti. – No h’etaṃ bhante.
- Yehi Ānanda ākārehi yehi liṅgehi yehi nimittehi yehi uddesehi nāmakāyassa paññatti hoti, tesu ākāresu tesu liṅgesu tesu nimittesu tesu uddesesu asati, api nu kho rūpakāye adhivacanasamphasso paññāyethā’ti. – No h’etaṃ bhante. (*Mahānidāna Sutta*, D 15 – the order of the two passages has been switched.)
- 100 Nāmarūpaṃ cidaṃ, bhikkhave, kimnidānaṃ kimsamudayaṃ kimjāti-kaṃ kimpabhavaṃ? Nāmarūpaṃ viññāṇanidānaṃ viññāṇasamudayaṃ viññāṇajātikaṃ viññāṇapabhavaṃ. (*Mahātaṇhāsaṅkhaya Sutta*, M 38)
- 101 Evaṃ byā kho ahaṃ, bhante, bhagavatā dhammaṃ desitaṃ ājānāmi yathā tadevidaṃ viññāṇaṃ sandhāvati saṃsarati, anaññaṃ’ti. – Kata-maṃ taṃ, sāti, viññāṇaṃ’ti? – Yvāyaṃ, bhante, vado vedeyyo tatra tatra kalyāṇapāpakānaṃ kammānaṃ vipākaṃ paṭisaṃvedeti’ti. – Kassa nu kho nāma tvaṃ, moghapurisa, mayā evaṃ dhammaṃ desitaṃ ājānāsi? Nanu mayā, moghapurisa, anekapariyāyena paṭiccasamuppannaṃ viññāṇaṃ vuttaṃ, aññatra paccayā natthi viññāṇassa sambhavoti? (*ibid.*)
- 102 Nāmarūpe kho sati viññāṇaṃ hoti, nāmarūpapaccayā viññāṇaṃ’ti. (*Mahāpadāna Sutta*, D 14)
- 103 Yo hi koci ... evaṃ vadeyya – ‘Ahamaññatra rūpā, aññatra vedanāya, aññatra saññāya, aññatra saṅkhārehi, viññāṇassa āgatiṃ vā gatiṃ vā cutiṃ vā upapattiṃ vā vuddhiṃ vā virūḷhiṃ vā vepullaṃ vā pañña-pessāmi’ti – netam ṭhānaṃ vijjati. (*Devadaha Sutta*, M 102)

- 104 Seyyathāpi, bhikkhave, yaṃ yadeva paccayaṃ paṭicca aggi jalati tena teneva saṅkhyāṃ gacchati. Katthañca paṭicca aggi jalati, katthaggitveva saṅkhyāṃ gacchati; sakalikañca paṭicca aggi jalati, sakalikaggitveva saṅkhyāṃ gacchati; tiṇaṃ paṭicca aggi jalati, tiṇaggitveva saṅkhyāṃ gacchati; gomayañca paṭicca aggi jalati, gomayaggitveva saṅkhyāṃ gacchati; thusaṃ paṭicca aggi jalati, thusaggitveva saṅkhyāṃ gacchati; saṅkārañca paṭicca aggi jalati, saṅkāraggitveva saṅkhyāṃ gacchati. Evameva kho, bhikkhave, yaṃ yadeva paccayaṃ paṭicca uppajjati viññāṇaṃ, tena teneva saṅkhyāṃ gacchati. Cakkhuñca paṭicca rūpe ca uppajjati viññāṇaṃ, cakkhuvīññāṇaṃ tveva saṅkhyāṃ gacchati ... Vīññāṇaṃ saṅkhāranidānaṃ saṅkhārasamudayaṃ saṅkhārājātikāṃ saṅkhārapabhavaṃ. (M 38)
- 105 Atha kho bhagavā tassa bhikkhuno cetasā cetoparivitakkamaññāya bhikkhū āmantesi – Tṭhānaṃ kho panetaṃ, bhikkhave, vijjati yaṃ idhekacco moghapuriso avidvā avijjāgato tanhādhipateyyena cetasā satthu sāsanaṃ atidhāvitabbaṃ maññeyya: ‘Iti kira, bho, rūpaṃ anattā, vedanā anattā, saññā anattā, saṅkhārā anattā, viññāṇaṃ anattā; anattakatāni kammāni kamattānaṃ phusissanti’ti? (*Mahāpunṇama Sutta*, M 109)
- 106 *Clearing the Path*, p.265f. In *this book* the Pāli terms have been tacitly translated into English, which is more in line with the style of this *post-script*.
- 107 Taññeva nu kho, ayye, upādānaṃ te pañc’upādānakkhandhā udāhu aññatra pañcah’upādānakkhandhehi upādānaṃ’ti? – Na kho, āvuso visākha, taññeva upādānaṃ te pañc’upādānakkhandhā, nāpi aññatra pañcah’upādānakkhandhehi upādānaṃ. Yo kho, āvuso visākha, pañcas’ upādānakkhandhesu chandarāgo taṃ tattha upādānaṃ’ti. (*Cūḷavedalla Sutta*, M 44)
- 108 Ettāvataṃ kho Ānanda jāyetha vā jiyetha vā miyetha vā cavetha vā uppajjetha vā, ettāvataṃ adhivacanapatho, ettāvataṃ niruttipatho, ettāvataṃ paññattipatho, ettāvataṃ paññāvacaram, ettāvataṃ vaṭṭam vaṭṭati itthattaṃ paññāpanāya, yadidaṃ nāmarūpaṃ saha viññāṇena. (*Mahānidāna Sutta*, D 15)
- 109 Ye hi keci bhikkhave samaṇā vā brāhmaṇā vā anekavihitāṃ attānaṃ samanupassamānā samanupassanti, sabbe te pañc’upādānakkhandhe samanupassanti etesaṃ vā aññātaraṃ. (*Samanupassanā Sutta*, S 22.47)

- 110 Cakkhuñcāvuso, paṭicca rūpe ca uppajjati cakkhuviññāṇaṃ. Tiṇṇaṃ saṅgati phasso. Phassapaccayā vedanā. Yaṃ vedeti taṃ sañjānāti, yaṃ sañjānāti taṃ vitakketi, yaṃ vitakketi taṃ papañceti, yaṃ papañceti tatonidānaṃ purisaṃ papañcasaññāsāṅkhā samudācaranti atītānāgata-paccuppannesu cakkhuviññeyyesu rūpesu. (*Madhupiṇḍika Sutta*, M 18)
- 111 Cakkhuñca paṭicca rūpe ca uppajjati cakkhuviññāṇaṃ. Tiṇṇaṃ saṅgati phasso. Phassapaccayā vedanā. Vedanāpaccayā taṇhā. Ayaṃ kho, bhikkhave, dukkhassa samudayo. (*Dukkha Sutta*, S 23. 43)
- 112 Katame ca, bhikkhave, upādāniyā dhammā, katamañca upādānaṃ? Cakkhuṃ, bhikkhave, upādāniyo dhammo. Yo tattha chandarāgo, taṃ tattha upādānaṃ ... pe. / Katame ca, bhikkhave, saṃyojaniyā dhammā, katamañca saṃyojanaṃ? Cakkhuṃ, bhikkhave, saṃyojaniyo dhammo. Yo tattha chandarāgo, taṃ tattha saṃyojanaṃ ... pe. (S 35. 110/109)
- 113 Sabbāṃ vo, bhikkhave, desessāmi. Taṃ suṇātha. Kiñca, bhikkhave, sabbāṃ? Cakkhuñceva rūpā ca, sotañca saddā ca, ghāṇaṃca gandhā ca, jivhā ca rasā ca, kāyo ca phoṭṭhabbā ca, mano ca dhammā ca – idaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, sabbāṃ. Yo, bhikkhave, evaṃ vadeyya – ‘Aham-etam sabbāṃ paccakkhāya aññaṃ sabbāṃ paññāpessāmi’ ti, tassa vācāvatthukamevassa; puṭṭho ca na sampāyeyya, uttariñca vighātāṃ āpajjeyya. Taṃ kissa hetu? Yathā taṃ, bhikkhave, avisayasmin’ ti (*Sabba Sutta*, S 35. 23)
- 114 ‘Viññāṇaṃ anidassanaṃ anantaṃ sabbato pabhaṃ’, taṃ ... sabbassa sabbattena ananubhūtaṃ. (*Brahmanimantaṇika Sutta*, M 49)
- ‘Viññāṇaṃ anidassanaṃ, anantaṃ sabbato pabhaṃ. Ettha āpo ca patha-vī, tejo vāyo na gādhati. Ettha dīghaṃca rassaṃca, aṇuṃ thūlaṃ subhā-subhaṃ, ettha nāmañca rūpañca, asesāṃ uparujjhati. Viññāṇassa ni-rodhena, etthetaṃ uparujjhati’ ti. (*Kevaṭṭa Sutta*, D 11)
- 115 Kiṃ nu kho, bho gotama, sabbamekattaṃ’ti? – Sabbamekattaṃ’ti kho, brāhmaṇa, tatiyametaṃ lokāyataṃ. – Kiṃ pana, bho gotama, sabbāṃ puthuttaṃ’ti? – Sabbāṃ puthuttaṃ’ti kho, brāhmaṇa, catutthametam lokāyataṃ. (*Lokāyatika Sutta*, S 12. 48)
- 116 Puna caparaṃ, ānanda, bhikkhu amanasikaritvā manussasaññaṃ, amanasikaritvā araññaññaṃ, pathavisaññaṃ paṭicca manasi karoti ekattaṃ. Tassa pathavisaññāya cittaṃ pakkhandati pasīdati santiṭṭhati adhimuccati. Seyyathāpi, ānanda, āsabhacammaṃ saṅkusatena suviha-

taṃ vigatavalikaṃ; evameva kho, ānanda, bhikkhu yaṃ imissā patha-viyā ukkūlavikkūlaṃ nadīviduggaṃ khānukaṇṭakattḥānaṃ pabbata-visamaṃ taṃ sabbaṃ amanasikaritvā pathavisaññaṃ paṭicca manasi karoti ekattaṃ. Tassa pathavisaññāya cittaṃ pakkhandati pasīdati santiṭṭhati adhimuccati. So evaṃ pajānāti – ‘Ye assu darathā manussa-saññaṃ paṭicca tedha na santi, ye assu darathā araññasaññaṃ paṭicca tedha na santi, atthi cevāyaṃ darathamattā yadidaṃ – pathavisaññaṃ paṭicca ekattaṃ’ti. So ‘Suññaṃ idaṃ saññāgataṃ manussasaññāyā’ti pajānāti, ‘suññaṃ idaṃ saññāgataṃ araññasaññāyā’ti pajānāti, ‘atthi cevadaṃ asuññataṃ yadidaṃ – pathavisaññaṃ paṭicca ekattaṃ’ti. Iti yañhi kho tattha na hoti tena taṃ suññaṃ samanupassati, yaṃ pana tattha avasiṭṭhaṃ hoti taṃ ‘santamidaṃ atthi’ti pajānāti. Evampissa esā, ānanda, yathābhuccā avipallattā parisuddhā suññatāvakkanti bhavati. (*Cūlasuññatā Sutta*, M 121)

117 Sabbaṃ, bhikkhave, ādittaṃ. Kiñca, bhikkhave, sabbaṃ ādittaṃ? Cakkhu, bhikkhave, ādittaṃ, rūpā ādittā, cakkhuviññāṇaṃ ādittaṃ, cakkhusamphassa āditto. Yampidaṃ cakkhusamphassapaccayā uppajjati vedayitaṃ sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā adukkhamasukhaṃ vā tampi ādittaṃ. Kena ādittaṃ? Ādittaṃ rāg’agginā dos’agginā moh’agginā, ādittaṃ jātiyā jarā-maraṇena, sokehi paridevehi dukkhehi domanassehi upāyāsehi ādittaṃ’ti vadāmi. (*Āditta-pariyāya Sutta*, S 35. 28)

118 Yopi so, bhikkhave, bhikkhu arahaṃ khīṇāsavo vusitavā katakaraṇīyo ohitabhāro anuppattasadattho parikkhīṇabhavasamīyojano sammadañña vimutto, sopi ekattaṃ ekattato ... nānattaṃ nanattato ... sabbaṃ sabbatto abhijānāti; ekattaṃ ekattato ... nānattaṃ nanattato ... sabbaṃ sabbatto abhiññāya ekattaṃ ... nānattaṃ ... sabbaṃ na maññati, ekattasmiṃ ... nānattasmiṃ ... sabbasmiṃ na maññati, ekattato ... nanattato ... sabbatto na maññati, ekattaṃ ... nānattaṃ ... sabbaṃ me’ti na maññati, ekattaṃ ... nānattaṃ ... sabbaṃ nābhinandati.

Taṃ kissa hetu? ‘Pariññataṃ tassā’ti vadāmi. (*Mūlapariyāya Sutta*, M 1)

119 Yasmiṃ samaye, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye ... vedanāsu ... citte ... dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati ātāpi sampajāno satimā vineyya loke abhiññādomanassaṃ, upaṭṭhitassa tasmīṃ samaye sati hoti asammuttā. Yasmiṃ samaye, bhikkhave, bhikkhuno upaṭṭhitā sati hoti asammuttā, satisambojjhaṅgo tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhuno āraddho hoti, satisambojjhaṅgaṃ tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhu bhāveti, satisambojjhaṅgo tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhuno bhāvanāpāripūriṃ gacchati.

So tathāsato viharanto taṃ dhammaṃ paññāya pavicinati pavicayati parivīmaṃsaṃ āpajjati. Yasmiṃ samaye, bhikkhave, bhikkhu tathāsato viharanto taṃ dhammaṃ paññāya pavicinati pavicayati parivīmaṃsaṃ āpajjati, dhammavicayasambojjhaṅgo tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhuno ārad-dho hoti, dhammavicayasambojjhaṅgaṃ tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhu bhāveti, dhammavicayasambojjhaṅgo tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhuno bhāvanā-pāripūriṃ gacchati.

Tassa taṃ dhammaṃ paññāya pavicinato pavicayato parivīmaṃsaṃ āpajjato ārad-dhaṃ hoti vīriyaṃ asallīnaṃ. Yasmiṃ samaye, bhikkhave, bhikkhuno taṃ dhammaṃ paññāya pavicinato pavicayato parivīmaṃsaṃ āpajjato ārad-dhaṃ hoti vīriyaṃ asallīnaṃ, vīriyasambojjhaṅgo tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhuno ārad-dho hoti, vīriyasambojjhaṅgaṃ tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhu bhāveti, vīriyasambojjhaṅgo tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhuno bhāvanāpāripūriṃ gacchati.

Ārad-dhavīriyassa uppajjati pīti nirāmisā. Yasmiṃ samaye, bhikkhave, bhikkhuno ārad-dhavīriyassa uppajjati pīti nirāmisā, pītisambojjhaṅgo tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhuno ārad-dho hoti, pītisambojjhaṅgaṃ tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhu bhāveti, pītisambojjhaṅgo tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhuno bhāvanāpāripūriṃ gacchati.

Pītimanassa kāyopi passambhati, cittampi passambhati. Yasmiṃ samaye, bhikkhave, bhikkhuno pītimanassa kāyopi passambhati, cittampi passambhati, passaddhisambojjhaṅgo tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhuno ārad-dho hoti, passaddhisambojjhaṅgaṃ tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhu bhāveti, passaddhisambojjhaṅgo tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhuno bhāvanāpāripūriṃ gacchati.

Passaddhakāyassa sukhino cittaṃ samādhīyati. Yasmiṃ samaye, bhikkhave, bhikkhuno passaddhakāyassa sukhino cittaṃ samādhīyati, samādhisambojjhaṅgo tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhuno ārad-dho hoti, samādhisambojjhaṅgaṃ tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhu bhāveti, samādhisambojjhaṅgo tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhuno bhāvanāpāripūriṃ gacchati.

So tathāsamāhitaṃ cittaṃ sādhukaṃ ajjhupekkhitā hoti. Yasmiṃ samaye, bhikkhave, bhikkhu tathāsamāhitaṃ cittaṃ sādhukaṃ ajjhupekkhitā hoti, upekkhāsambojjhaṅgo tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhuno ārad-dho hoti, upekkhāsambojjhaṅgaṃ tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhu bhāveti, upekkhāsambojjhaṅgo tasmīṃ samaye bhikkhuno bhāvanāpāripūriṃ gacchati.

Evam bhāvitā kho, bhikkhave, cattāro satipaṭṭhānā evam bahulikatā satta sambojjaṅge paripūrenti. (*Ānāpānassati Sutta*, M118)

- 120 Ajjhattikaṃ, bhikkhave, aṅganti karitvā nāññaṃ ekaṅgampi samanupassāmi sattannaṃ bojjaṅgānaṃ uppādāya, yathayidaṃ – bhikkhave, yonisomanasikāro. Yonisomanasikārasampannassetāṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhuno pāṭikaṅkhaṃ – satta bojjaṅge bhāvēssati, satta bojjaṅge bahulikarissati. ... Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu satisambojjaṅgaṃ bhāveti vivekanissitaṃ ... pe ... upekkhāsambojjaṅgaṃ bhāveti vivekanissitaṃ virāganissitaṃ nirodhanissitaṃ vossaggapariṇāmaṃ. (*Ajjhattikaṅga Sutta*, S46.49)

- 121 Ko ca, bhikkhave, āhāro anuppannassa vā dhammavicayasambojjaṅgassa uppādāya, uppannassa vā dhammavicayasambojjaṅgassa bhāvanāya pāripūriyā? Atthi, bhikkhave, kusalākusalā dhammā sāvajjānavajjā dhammā hīnapaṇītā dhammā kaṇhasukkasappaṭibhāgā dhammā. Tattha yonisomanasikārabahulikāro – ayamāhāro anuppannassa vā dhammavicayasambojjaṅgassa uppādāya, uppannassa vā dhammavicayasambojjaṅgassa bhāvanāya pāripūriyā. (*Āhāra Sutta*, S46.51)

- 122 So evaṃ ayoniso manasikaroti – ‘ahosiṃ nu kho ahaṃ atītamaddhānaṃ? Na nu kho ahosiṃ atītamaddhānaṃ? Kiṃ nu kho ahosiṃ atītamaddhānaṃ? Kathaṃ nu kho ahosiṃ atītamaddhānaṃ? Kiṃ hutvā kiṃ ahosiṃ nu kho ahaṃ atītamaddhānaṃ? Bhavissāmi nu kho ahaṃ anāgatamaddhānaṃ? Na nu kho bhavissāmi anāgatamaddhānaṃ? Kiṃ nu kho bhavissāmi anāgatamaddhānaṃ? Kathaṃ nu kho bhavissāmi anāgatamaddhānaṃ? Kiṃ hutvā kiṃ bhavissāmi nu kho ahaṃ anāgatamaddhānaṃ’?

Etarahi vā paccuppannamaddhānaṃ ajjhattaṃ kathaṃkathī hoti – ‘ahaṃ nu khosmi? No nu khosmi? Kiṃ nu khosmi? Kathaṃ nu khosmi? Ayaṃ nu kho satto kuto āgato? So kuhiṃ gāmi bhavissatī’?

So ‘idaṃ dukkhaṇ’ti yoniso manasikaroti, ‘ayaṃ dukkhasamudayo’ti yoniso manasikaroti, ‘ayaṃ dukkhanirodho’ti yoniso manasikaroti, ‘ayaṃ dukkhanirodhagāmini paṭipadā’ti yoniso manasikaroti. (*Sabbāsava Sutta*, M2)

- 123 Atthi, bhikkhave, subhanimittaṃ. Tattha ayonisomanasikārabahulikāro – ayamāhāro anuppannassa vā kāmaccchandassa uppādāya, uppannassa vā kāmaccchandassa bhiyyobhāvāya vepullāya.

Atthi, bhikkhave, asubhanimittam. Tattha yonisomanasikārabahulikāro – ayamanāhāro anuppannassa vā kāmaccchandassa uppādāya, uppannassa vā kāmaccchandassa bhiyyobhāvāya vepullāya. (*Āhāra Sutta*, S 46.51)

124 The quote has been compiled from two different passages:

Zur Ausweisung steht einzig das Entdeckt-sein des Seienden selbst, es im Wie seiner Entdecktheit ... Die Aussage ist *wahr*, bedeutet: sie entdeckt das Seiende an ihm selbst. Sie sagt aus, sie zeigt auf, sie »läßt sehen« das Seiende in seiner Entdecktheit. *Wahrsein (Wahrheit)* der Aussage muß verstanden werden als *entdeckend-sein*.

Wahrheit »gibt es« nur, sofern und solange Dasein ist. Seiendes ist nur *dann* entdeckt und nur *solange* erschlossen, als überhaupt Dasein ist. Die Gesetze *Newtons*, der Satz vom Widerspruch, jede Wahrheit überhaupt sind nur solange wahr, als Dasein ist. Vordem Dasein überhaupt nicht war, und nachdem Dasein überhaupt nicht mehr sein wird, war keine Wahrheit und wird keine sein, weil sie als Erschlossenheit, Entdeckung und Entdecktheit dann *nicht* sein kann. (*Sein und Zeit*, pp. 218 and 226 [261 and 269]; emphasis by Martin Heidegger.)

125 Quidquid recipitur ad modum recipientis recipitur. Cognitum est in cognoscente secundum modum cognoscentis. (Thomas Aquinas, Dominican monk in the 13th century, at first viewed with suspicion by the Church, but eventually canonised in the 14th century. He created a synthesis of classical Greek philosophy [Aristotelian] and Christian dogma. The quotes given here appear in his opus magnum *Summa Theologiae* and other books.)

126 Die Gesetze *Newtons* waren vor ihm weder wahr noch falsch, kann nicht bedeuten, das Seiende, das sie entdeckend aufzeigen, sei vordem nicht gewesen. Die Gesetze wurden durch *Newton* wahr, mit ihnen wurde für das Dasein Seiendes an ihm selbst zugänglich. (*Sein und Zeit*, p. 227 [269])

127 Uppādā vā bhikkhave Tathāgatānaṃ anuppādā vā Tathāgatānaṃ, ṭhitā’va sā dhātu dhammatṭhitatā dhammaniyāmatā: Sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā’ti. ... Sabbe saṅkhārā dukkhā’ti. ... Sabbe dhammā anattā’ti. Taṃ Tathāgato abhisambujjhati abhisameti. Abhisambujjhitvā abhisametvā ācikkhati deseti, paññāpeti paṭṭhapeti, vivarati vibhajati uttānīkaroti:

Sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā'ti. ... Sabbe saṅkhārā dukkhā'ti. ... Sabbe dhammā anattā'ti. (*Dhammaniyaṃ Sutta*, A 3.137)

- 128 The quote has been compiled from two different passages:

Daß es »ewige Wahrheiten« gibt, wird erst dann zureichend bewiesen sein, wenn der Nachweis gelungen ist, daß in alle Ewigkeit Dasein war und sein wird. Solange dieser Beweis aussteht, bleibt der Satz eine phantastische Behauptung, die dadurch nicht an Rechtmäßigkeit gewinnt, daß sie von den Philosophen gemeinhin »geglaubt« wird.

Die Behauptung »ewiger Wahrheiten«, ebenso wie die Vermengung der phänomenal gegründeten »Idealität« des Daseins mit einem idealisierten absoluten Subjekt gehören zu den längst noch nicht radikal ausgetriebenen Resten von christlicher Theologie innerhalb der philosophischen Problematik. (*Sein und Zeit*, Seiten 227 und 229 [269 f. and 272])

- 129 The chapter *Paramattha Sacca* in *Clearing the Path* deals with such a model. For *this* book here the topic is only of secondary interest.

- 130 When Indonesia became independent, it was implemented in the constitution that all religions that believed in a God were permitted. The Buddhists were in a bit of a tight spot. The Mahāyānists got themselves out of the danger zone with the following entry into the roll of Gods: "The Ādi-Buddha is our God." The Ādi-Buddha is some kind of primordial Buddha, from whom all normal Buddhas "emanate".

Since most Theravādins do not believe in an Ādi-Buddha, Nibbāna had to serve as God's ersatz.

- 131 A few passages in the discourses call Nibbāna a non-thing (in Heideggerian that would be "nonentity"): non-miserything, non-falsehood-thing. The classification of Nibbāna as being the ninth supramundane thing originated in an early commentary.

A 4.34 and a parallel passage speak of the foremost among the "determined things or undetermined". It is all about the cessation of conditions, the transition from determined things to the undetermined – dispassion (also defined as: squeezing out intoxication, removing thirst, uprooting attachment, breaking the round, destroying craving), cessation, Nibbāna. The juxtaposition of determined things and undetermined (plural) is probably merely rhetorical. Even scholasticism speaks of *one* undetermined "thing" only – Nibbāna.

- 132 A person believing in God – as the eternal Weltgeist, the ground of being for his or her soul – has the same problem. As soon as I make God *my* personal God, *my* heavenly Father who is interested in all *my* problems, God becomes temporal and is no longer the eternal Weltgeist.
- 133 Bhavanirodho nibbānaṃ. (*Sāriputta Sutta*, A 10. 7)
- 134 Yo bhikkhave rāgakkhayo dosakkhayo mohakkhayo, idaṃ vuccati bhikkhave asaṅkhataṃ/dhuvāṃ/nibbānaṃ. (*Asaṅkhata Saṃyutta*, S 43 – the counting and naming of the suttas here is difficult. Actually it is only one single discourse in 33 variations. The variations are invariably synonyms for Nibbāna.)
- 135 Atthi, bhikkhave, ajātaṃ abhūtaṃ akataṃ asaṅkhataṃ ... Yasmā ca kho, bhikkhave, atthi ajātaṃ abhūtaṃ akataṃ asaṅkhataṃ, tasmā jātassa bhūtassa katassa saṅkhatassa nissaraṇaṃ paññāyati. (*Tatiyanibbāna-ṭṭhisamīyutta Sutta*, Ud 73)
- 136 Tañhi, bhikkhu, musā yaṃ mosadhammaṃ, taṃ saccam yaṃ amosa-dhammaṃ nibbānaṃ. Tasmā evaṃ samannāgato bhikkhu iminā paramena saccādhiṭṭhānena samannāgato hoti. Etañhi, bhikkhu, paramaṃ ariyasaccaṃ yadidaṃ – amosadhammaṃ nibbānaṃ. (*Dhātuvibhaṅga Sutta*, M 140)
- 137 Sammādasanaṃ pana, bhante, kimatthiyaṇ'ti? – Sammādasanaṃ kho, rādha, nibbidatthaṃ. – Nibbidā pana, bhante, kimatthiyā'ti? – Nibbidā kho, rādha, virāgatthā. – Virāgo pana, bhante, kimatthiyo'ti? – Virāgo kho, rādha, vimuttattho. – Vimutti pana, bhante, kimatthiyā'ti? – Vimutti kho, rādha, nibbānatthā. – Nibbānaṃ pana, bhante, kimatthiyaṇ'ti? – Accayāsi, rādha, pañhaṃ, nāsakkhi pañhassa pariyantaṃ gahetuṃ. Nibbānogadhañhi, rādha, brahmacariyaṃ vussati, nibbāna-parāyaṇaṃ nibbānapariyosānaṇ'ti. (*Māra Sutta*, S 43. 1)
- 138 Vijjāya panāyye, kiṃ paṭibhāgo'ti? – Vijjāya kho, āvuso visākha, vimutti paṭibhāgo'ti. – Vimuttiyā panāyye, kiṃ paṭibhāgo'ti? – Vimuttiyā kho, āvuso visākha, nibbānaṃ paṭibhāgo'ti. – Nibbānassa panāyye, kiṃ paṭibhāgo'ti? – Accayāsi, āvuso visākha, pañhaṃ, nāsakkhi pañhānaṃ pariyantaṃ gahetuṃ. Nibbānogadhañhi, āvuso visākha, brahmacariyaṃ, nibbānaparāyaṇaṃ nibbānapariyosānaṃ. (*Cūlavedalla Sutta*, M 44)
- 139 Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ. (Dhp 204)

- 140 Idha, gahapatayo, ekacco musāvādaṃ pahāya musāvādā paṭivirato hoti. Sabhāgato vā parisāgato vā, ñātimajjhagato vā pūgamajjhagato vā rāja-kulamajjhagato vā, abhinīto sakkhiputtṭho – ‘ehambho purisa, yaṃ jānāsi taṃ vadehī’ti, so ajānaṃ vā āha – ‘na jānāmi’ti, jānaṃ vā āha – ‘jānāmi’ti, apassaṃ vā āha – ‘na passaṃ’ti, passaṃ vā āha – ‘passāmi’ti. Iti attahetu vā parahetu vā āmisakiñcikkhahetu vā na sampajānamusā bhāsita hoti. (*Salleyyaka Sutta*, M41)
- 141 Saddhā cepi, bhāradvāja, purisassa hoti; ‘evaṃ me saddhā’ti – iti vadaṃ saccamanurakkhati, natveva tāva ekaṃsena niṭṭhaṃ gacchati – ‘idameva saccaṃ, moghamaññaṃ’ti. () Ruci cepi, bhāradvāja, purisassa hoti ... pe ... Anussavo cepi, bhāradvāja, purisassa hoti ... pe ... Ākāraparivitakko cepi, bhāradvāja, purisassa hoti ... pe ... Diṭṭhinijjhānakkhanti cepi, bhāradvāja, purisassa hoti; ‘evaṃ me diṭṭhinijjhānakkhanti’ti – iti vadaṃ saccamanurakkhati, natveva tāva ekaṃsena niṭṭhaṃ gacchati – ‘idameva saccaṃ, moghamaññaṃ’ti. Ettāvatā kho, bhāradvāja, saccānurakkhaṇā hoti, ettāvatā saccamanurakkhati, ettāvatā ca mayaṃ saccānurakkhaṇaṃ paññapema. (*Caṅki Sutta*, M95)
- 142 Atthi nu kho imassāyasmato tathārūpā lobhaniyā ... dosaniyā ... mohaniyā dhammā yathārūpehi lobhaniyehi... dosaniyehi ... mohaniyehi dhammehi pariyādinnaṃ ajānaṃ vā vadeyya – jānāmi, apassaṃ vā vadeyya – passaṃ, paraṃ vā tadatthāya samādapeyya yaṃ paresaṃ assa dīgharattaṃ ahitāya dukkhāyāti? Tameṇaṃ samannesaṃāno evaṃ jānāti – ‘natthi kho imassāyasmato tathārūpā lobhaniyā ... dosaniyā ... mohaniyā dhammā yathārūpehi lobhaniyehi ... dosaniyehi ... mohaniyehi dhammehi pariyādinnaṃ ajānaṃ vā vadeyya – jānāmi, apassaṃ vā vadeyya – passaṃ, paraṃ vā tadatthāya samādapeyya yaṃ paresaṃ assa dīgharattaṃ ahitāya dukkhāya. Tathārūpo kho paṇimassāyasmato kāyasamācāro tathārūpo vaci-samācāro yathā taṃ aluddhassa ... aduṭṭhassa ... amūḷhassa. Yaṃ kho pana ayamāyasmā dhammaṃ deseti, gambhīro so dhammo duddaso duranubodho santo paṇito atakkāvacaro nipuṇo paṇḍitavedāniyo; na so dhammo sudesiyo luddhenā ... duṭṭhena ... mūḷhena’. (*ibid.*)
- 143 Yato naṃ samannesamaṇo visuddhaṃ lobhaniyehi ... dosaniyehi ... mohaniyehi dhammehi samanupassati; atha tamhi saddhaṃ niveseti, saddhājāto upasaṅkamati, upasaṅkamanto payirupāsati, payirupāsanto sotaṃ odahati, ohitasoto dhammaṃ suṇāti, sutvā dhammaṃ dhāreti, dhatānaṃ dhammaṇaṃ atthaṃ upaparikkhati, atthaṃ upaparikkhato

dhammā nijjhānaṃ khamanti, dhammanijjhānakkhantiyā sati chando jāyati, chandajāto ussahati, ussahitvā tuletī, tulayitvā padahati, pahitatto samāno kāyena ceva paramasaccaṃ sacchikaroti paññāya ca naṃ ativijjha passati. Ettāvatā kho, bhāradvāja, saccānubodho hoti, ettāvatā saccamanubujjhati, ettāvatā ca mayaṃ saccānubodham paññāpema; na tveva tāva saccānuppatti hotī’ti. (*ibid.*)

144 Tesāṃ dhammānaṃ āsevanā bhāvanā bahulikammaṃ saccānuppatti hoti. Ettāvatā kho, bhāradvāja, saccānuppatti hoti, ettāvatā saccamanupāpuṇāti, ettāvatā ca mayaṃ saccānuppattiṃ paññāpema’ti. (*ibid.*)

145 Sandittthiko ayaṃ, bhikkhave, dhammo akāliko ehipassiko opānāyiko paccattaṃ veditabbo viññūhi. (*Mahātanhāsankhaya Sutta*, M 38)

146 Dukkhaṃ, bhikkhave, ariyasaccaṃ pariññeyyaṃ, dukkhasamudayaṃ ariyasaccaṃ pahātappaṃ, dukkhanirodhaṃ ariyasaccaṃ sacchikātappaṃ, dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā ariyasaccaṃ bhāvetappaṃ. (*Pariññeyya Sutta*, S 56. 29)

147 Yo, bhikkhave, dukkhaṃ passati dukkhasamudayampi so passati, dukkhanirodhampi passati, dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadampi passati. Yo dukkhasamudayaṃ passati dukkhampi so passati, dukkhanirodhampi passati, dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadampi passati. Yo dukkhanirodhaṃ passati dukkhampi so passati, dukkhasamudayampi passati, dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadampi passati. Yo dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadaṃ passati dukkhampi so passati, dukkhasamudayampi passati, dukkhanirodhampi passati’ti. (*Gavampati Sutta*, S 56. 30)

148 จิตที่ส่งออกนอก เป็นสมุทัย ผลอันเกิดจากจิตที่ส่งออกนอก เป็นทุกข์ จิตเห็นจิต เป็นมรรค ผลอันเกิดจากจิตเห็นจิต เป็นนิโรธ (*หลวงปู่ฝาดบัว*, หน้า ๑๘ [3])

This collection of Luang Pū Dūn Atulo’s aphorisms, titled “What Luang Pū left behind“, has been published in so many different editions, that the page number is not very informative. But that does not matter because each aphorism is easy to trace – in case someone had that anyway in mind.

149 ดูโลกก็ดูทุกข์ ดูทุกข์ก็ดูโลก ดูสังขารก็ดูทุกข์ ดูทุกข์ก็ดูสังขาร ... มีความหมายอันเดียวกันทั้งนั้นไม่ผิด (*พระหล้า เขมป/ตุโต*, หน้า ๘๓ [117])

150 Atha kho, bhikkhave, vipassissa bodhisattassa etadahosi – ‘kimhi nu kho sati jarāmarañam hoti, kimpacayā jarāmarāṇan’ti? Atha kho, bhikkhave, vipassissa bodhisattassa yoniso manasikārā ahu paññāya abhisamayo – ‘jātiyā kho sati jarāmarañam hoti, jātipaccayā jarāmarāṇan’ti.

Atha kho, bhikkhave, vipassissa bodhisattassa etadahosi – ‘kimhi nu kho sati jāti hoti, kimpacayā jāti’ti? Atha kho, bhikkhave, vipassissa bodhisattassa yoniso manasikārā ahu paññāya abhisamayo – ‘bhave kho sati jāti hoti, bhavapaccayā jāti’ti.

‘Upādāne kho sati bhavo hoti, upādānapaccayā bhavo’ti. (*Mahāpadāna Sutta*, D 14)

151 Evaṃ me rūpaṃ ... vedanā ... saññā ... saṅkhārā ... viññāṇaṃ hontu evaṃ me rūpaṃ ... vedanā ... saññā ... saṅkhārā ... viññāṇaṃ mā ahesun’ti.

Yasmā ca kho bhikkhave rūpaṃ ... vedanā ... saññā ... saṅkhārā ... viññāṇaṃ anattā, tasmā rūpaṃ ... vedanā ... saññā ... saṅkhārā ... viññāṇaṃ ābādhāya samvattanti, na ca labbhati rūpe ... vedanāya ... saññāya ... saṅkhāresu ... viññāṇe: Evaṃ me rūpaṃ ... vedanā ... saññā ... saṅkhārā ... viññāṇaṃ hontu evaṃ me rūpaṃ ... vedanā ... saññā ... saṅkhārā ... viññāṇaṃ mā ahesun’ti. (*Anattalakkhaṇa Sutta*, S 22.59; the statements to all five khandhas have been condensed here to one single sentence in each case.)

152 Cattārimāni, āvuso, upādānāni – kāmupādānaṃ, diṭṭhupādānaṃ, sīlabatupādānaṃ, attavādupādānaṃ. (*Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta*, M 9)

153 Sādhu, bhikkhave. Ahampi kho taṃ, bhikkhave, attavādupādānaṃ na samanupassāmi yaṃsa attavādupādānaṃ upādiyato na uppajjeyyuhī sokaparidevadukkhadomanassupāyāsā. (*Alagaddūpama Sutta*, M 22)

154 Bhavataṇhāmpāhaṃ, bhikkhave, sāhāraṃ vadāmi, no anāhāraṃ. Ko cāhāro bhavataṇhāya? ‘Avijjā’tissa vacaniyaṃ. (*Taṇhā Sutta*, A 10.62)

155 Imasmiṃ sati idaṃ hoti, imassuppādā idaṃ uppajjati, yadidaṃ ... (*Mahātaṇhāsāṅkhaya Sutta*, M 38)

- 156 Katamañca, bhikkhave, dukkhasamudayo ariyasaccaṃ? Avijjāpaccayā saṅkhārā, saṅkhārapaccayā viññāṇaṃ, viññāṇapaccayā nāmarūpaṃ, nāmarūpapaccayā saḷāyatanam, saḷāyatanapaccayā phasso, phassapaccayā vedanā, vedanāpaccayā taṇhā, taṇhāpaccayā upādānaṃ, upādānapaccayā bhavo, bhavapaccayā jāti, jātipaccayā jarāmaṇaṃ sokaparidevadukkhadomanassupāyāsā sambhavanti. Evametassa kevalassa dukkhakkhandhassa samudayo hoti. Idam vuccati, bhikkhave, dukkhasamudayaṃ ariyasaccaṃ. (*Titthāyatanādi Sutta*, A 3.62)
- 157 Dukkhaṃ eva hi sambhoti, dukkhaṃ tiṭṭhati veti ca, nāññatra dukkhā sambhoti, nāññaṃ dukkhā nirujjhati ti. (*Vajirā Sutta*, S 5.10)
- 158 Kierkegaard would have referred to them as “loose thinking hiding behind expressions of the most presuming kind”: ... en løs Tænkning, skjult af de meest anmaasende Udtryk. (*op.cit.*, p.97 [94])
- 159 ถามว่า หลงลวปู่ ไก่กับไข่อะไรเกิดก่อน หลงลวปู่บอกว่า “เกิดพร้อมกันนั่นแหละ” (หลวงปู่/ผไท, หน้า ๑๐๐ [my own translation])
- 160 Yaṃ kho, āvuso, dukkhe aññāṇaṃ, dukkhasamudaye aññāṇaṃ, dukkhanirodhe aññāṇaṃ, dukkhanirodhagāminiyā paṭipadāya aññāṇaṃ – ayaṃ vuccatāvuso, avijjā. (*Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta*, M 9)
- 161 In Pāli “nothing” is *n’atthi*, “it is not”. Heidegger claims in *Was ist Metaphysik?*, “The nothing is more fundamental than the not and negation.” But he adds that one cannot say that nothing *is*. “Nothing itself nihilates.” – „Das Nichts ist ursprünglicher als das Nicht und die Verneinung. ... Das Nichts selbst nichtet.“ (p.34) And Sartre adds: “Nothing is not; it nihilates itself.” – „Le néant n’est pas, il se néantise.“ (*L’être et le néant*, p. 52 [59]) I mention this just in passing.
- 162 So evaṃ anurodhavirodhaṃ samāpanno yaṃ kiñci vedanaṃ vedeti sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā adukkhamasukhaṃ vā, so taṃ vedanaṃ abhinandati abhivadati ajjhosāya tiṭṭhati. Tassa taṃ vedanaṃ abhinandato abhivadato ajjhosāya tiṭṭhato uppajjati nandī. Yā vedanāsu nandī tadupādānaṃ, tassupādānapaccayā bhavo, bhavapaccayā jāti, jātipaccayā jarāmaṇaṃ sokaparidevadukkhadomanassupāyāsā sambhavanti. Evametassa kevalassa dukkhakkhandhassa samudayo hoti. (*Mahātaṇhā-saṅkhaya Sutta*, M 38)
- 163 *Mind Is What Matters*, p.66

- 164 Actually it is more of a simile, because strictly speaking the round table is already an example of coming-into-the-world, conditioned by being. But since the structure of dependent co-arising applies everywhere, the simile can also serve as a valid example.
- 165 “Ein Münchner im Himmel”, a satire by Ludwig Thoma from the year 1911: A porter from Munich goes to heaven after his death and finds out that there is no beer and that it is generally quite boring. He runs riot. God lets him have a holiday on earth, with the requirement that he should convey divine counsel to the Bavarian government. But he gets stuck in his favourite pub, the Hofbräuhaus. The author was at the time sentenced to pay a fine for insulting the Bavarian government.
- 166 Cakkhuñca paṭicca rūpe ca uppajjati cakkhuviññāṇaṃ, tiṇṇaṃ saṅgati phasso, phassapaccayā vedanā, vedanāpaccayā taṇhā; ... pe. (*Chachakka Sutta*, M 148)
- 167 Sukhāya kho, āvuso visākha, vedanāya rāgānusayo anuseti, dukkhāya vedanāya paṭighānusayo anuseti, adukkhamasukhāya vedanāya avijjānusayo anuseti’ti. (*Cūḷavedalla Sutta*, M 44)
- 168 Āsavaśamudayā avijjāsamudayo, āsavanirodhā avijjānirodho... Tayome, āvuso, āsavā – kāmāsavo, bhavāsavo, avijjāsavo. Avijjāsamudayā āvasaśamudayo, avijjānirodhā āsavanirodho. (*Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta*, M 9)
- 169 Purimā, bhikkhave, koṭi na paññāyati avijjāya – ‘ito pubbe avijjā nāho-si, atha pacchā samabhavi’ti. Evañcetaṃ, bhikkhave, vuccati, atha ca pana paññāyati – ‘idappaccayā avijjā’ti. Avijjampāhaṃ, bhikkhave, sāhāraṃ vadāmi, no anāhāraṃ. (*Avijjā Sutta*, A 10.61) The five hindrances are this nutriment of ignorance.
- 170 Api c’Udāyi tiṭṭhatu pubbanto tiṭṭhatu aparanto, dhammaṃ te desessāmi: Imasmiṃ sati idaṃ hoti, imass’uppādā idaṃ uppajjati; imasmiṃ asati idaṃ na hoti, imassa nirodhā idaṃ nirujjhati’ti. (*Cūḷasakuludāyi Sutta*, M 79)

- 171 Katamañca, bhikkhave, dukkhanirodham ariyasaccaṃ? Avijjāya tveva asesavirāgaṇirodhā saṅkhāraṇirodho, saṅkhāraṇirodhā viññāṇaṇirodho, viññāṇaṇirodhā nāmarūpaṇirodho, nāmarūpaṇirodhā salāyatananirodho, salāyatananirodhā phassanirodho, phassanirodhā vedanānirodho, vedanānirodhā taṇhānirodho, taṇhānirodhā upādānaṇirodho, upādānaṇirodhā bhavaṇirodho, bhavaṇirodhā jātinirodho, jātinirodhā jarāmaṇaṇaṃ sokaparidevadukkhadomanassupāyāsā nirujjhanti. Evametassa kevalassa dukkhakkhandhassa nirodho hoti. Idaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, dukkhanirodham ariyasaccaṃ. (*Tiṭṭhāyatanādi Sutta*, A3.62)
- 172 Taṃ kiṃ maññatha bhikkhave rūpaṃ ... vedanā ... saññā ... saṅkhārā ... viññāṇaṃ niccaṃ vā aniccaṃ vā'ti. – Aniccaṃ bhante. – Yam-panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vā taṃ sukhaṃ vā'ti. – Dukkhaṃ bhante. – Yam-panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vipariṇāma-dhammaṃ, kallaṃ nu taṃ samanupassitum: Etaṃ mama eso'ham-asmi eso me attā'ti. – No hetuṃ bhante. – Tas-mātiha bhikkhave: Yaṅkiñci rūpaṃ ... yā kāci vedanā ... yā kāci saññā ... ye keci saṅkhārā ... yaṅkiñci viññāṇaṃ atitānāgatapaccuppannaṃ, ajjhattaṃ vā bahiddhā vā, oḷārikaṃ vā sukhumaṃ vā, hīnaṃ vā paṇītaṃ vā, yandūre santike vā, sabbaṃ rūpaṃ ... sabbā vedanā ... sabbā saññā ... sabbe saṅkhārā ... sabbaṃ viññāṇaṃ: Netuṃ mama neso'ham-asmi na meso attā'ti. Evam-etaṃ yathābhūtaṃ sammappaññāya daṭṭhabbam.
- Evam passam bhikkhave sutavā ariya-sāvako, rūpasmiṃ pi nibbindati, vedanāya pi nibbindati, saññāya pi nibbindati, saṅkhāresu pi nibbindati, viññāṇasmiṃ pi nibbindati. Nibbindaṃ virajjati. Virāgā vimuccati. Vimuttasmiṃ vimuttam-iti ñaṇaṃ hoti: Khīṇā jāti, vusitaṃ brahmacariyaṃ, kataṃ karaṇīyaṃ, nāparaṃ itthattāyāti pajānāti'ti. (*Anattalakkhaṇa Sutta*, S22.59)
- 173 So tehi dhammehi cittaṃ paṭivāpetvā amatāya dhātuyā cittaṃ upasaṃharati – 'etaṃ santaṃ etaṃ paṇītaṃ yadidaṃ sabbasaṅkhārasamatho sabbūpadhipaṭṭhiṇissaggo taṇhākkhayaṃ virāgo nirodho nibbānaṃ'ti. So tatha tṭhito āsavānaṃ khayam apapaṇāti. (*Mahāmālunkya Sutta*, M64)
- 174 Rūpaṃ, bhikkhave, aniccaṃ, vedanā aniccā, saññā aniccā, saṅkhārā aniccā, viññāṇaṃ aniccaṃ. Rūpaṃ, bhikkhave, anattā, vedanā anattā, saññā anattā, saṅkhārā anattā, viññāṇaṃ anattā. Sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā, sabbe dhammā anattā'ti (*Cūḷasaccaka Sutta*, M35)

175 Kathaṇca, bhikkhave, jānato kathaṃ passato anantarā āsavānaṃ khayō hoti? Idha bhikkhave, assutavā puthujjano ariyānaṃ adassāvī ariya-dhammassa akovido ariyadhamme avinīto, sappurisānaṃ adassāvī sappurisa-dhammassa akovido sappurisa-dhamme avinīto [pañcakkhandhe] attato samanupassati. Yā kho pana sā, bhikkhave, samanupassanā sankhāro so. So pana sankhāro kiṃnidāno kiṃsamudayo kiṃjātiko kiṃpabhavo? Avijjāsamphassajena, bhikkhave, vedayitena phuṭṭhassa assutavato puthujjanassa uppannā taṇhā; tatojo so sankhāro. Iti kho, bhikkhave, sopi sankhāro anicco sankhato paṭiccasamuppanno. Sāpi taṇhā aniccā sankhatā paṭiccasamuppannā. Sāpi vedanā, sopi phasso anicco sankhato paṭiccasamuppanno. Sāpi avijjā aniccā sankhatā paṭiccasamuppannā. Evampi kho, bhikkhave, jānato evaṃ passato anantarā āsavānaṃ khayō hoti. (*Parileyya Sutta*, S 22. 81)

176 “Sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā’ti” ... “Sabbe saṅkhārā dukkhā’ti” ... “Sabbe dhammā anattā’ti” yadā paññāya passati, atha nibbindati dukkhe, esa maggo visuddhiyā. (*Dhp* 277–279)

177 Now we have found the reason for the scholarly models of change and impermanence. No scholar can admit that his own very existence is based on impermanent determinations, and that even this he does not know. Therefore it can not be the determinations’ fault that “all determinations are impermanent” is hard to see.

So they are simply re-defined as “conditioned phenomena”, and the difficulty of living with the contradiction of Dasein is done with. But something *is* needed to explain this difficulty. And the solution is: “The change and impermanence that we see in normal life is not what the Buddha meant. He meant a change that we *cannot* see.” That’s why there is this flight of fancy into mind moments and flux. So it can again be difficult, without having to admit one’s basic ignorance (“I do not know, that I don’t know.”). And then everything is solved. The scholar is okay with not being able to reach the end of suffering, but he will reach something better instead. He can congratulate himself that he understands the Buddha’s teaching so well. He can interpret it, explain it, write scientific treatises about it, debate ...

- 178 Cha, bhikkhave, ānisaṃse sampassamānena alameva bhikkhunā sabba-saṅkhāresu anodhiṃ karitvā aniccasaññāṃ upaṭṭhāpetuṃ. Katame cha? ‘Sabbasaṅkhārā ca me anavatthitā khāyissanti, sabbaloke ca me mano nābhiraṃissati, sabbalokā ca me mano vuṭṭhahissati, nibbānapoṇaṇṇa me mānasāṃ bhavissati, saṃyojanā ca me pahānaṃ gacchissanti, paramena ca sāmāññena samannāgato bhavissāmi’ti. (*Anavatthita Sutta*, A 6.102)
- 179 This is an instruction in Autogenic training. It is borrowed (or marketed) from oriental wisdom and grew popular in the 1970s, long before NVC™ and MBSR™, more or less contemporary with TM™. AT™ helped itself to Hatha Yoga.
- 180 ปิติใหญ่เกิดขึ้นคล้าย ๆ กับว่าจะชนภูเขาทะลุขั้วลัดนิ้วมือเดียว แต่ก็ไม่หลงตัวว่าจะชนเพราะมีสติปัญญาสมดุลกันอยู่ว่าปิติปิตอยู่ ไม่หลงลืมตัวได้ง่าย ๆ รู้จักข่มปิติได้เพราะสุขก็ดี อุเบกขาก็ดี ปิตีก็ดี อยู่ได้อานาจอนิจจังเกิดขึ้นแล้ว แปรดับ (*พระหล้า เขมป/ตโต*, หน้า ๔๖ [76])
- 181 *Beginnings*, p. 82ff.
- 182 So vata, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sabbasaṅkhāre aniccato samanupassanto anulomikāya khantiyā samannāgato bhavissati’ti tñānametaṃ vijjati. (*Anicca Sutta*, A 6. 98)
- 183 Chahi, bhikkhave, dhammehi samannāgato suṇanto saddhammaṃ bhabbo niyāmaṃ okkamituṃ kusalesu dhammesu sammattaṃ. Katamehi chahi? Tathāgatappavedite dhammavinaye desiyamāne sussūsati, sotam odahati, aññā cittaṃ upaṭṭhāpeti, atthaṃ gaṇhāti, anattaṃ riñcati, anulomikāya khantiyā samannāgato hoti. Imehi kho, bhikkhave, chahi dhammehi samannāgato suṇanto saddhammaṃ bhabbo niyāmaṃ okkamituṃ kusalesu dhammesu sammattaṃ’ti. (*Sussūsati Sutta*, A 6. 88)
- 184 ‘Anulomikāya khantiyā samannāgato sammattaniyāmaṃ okkamissati’ti tñānametaṃ vijjati. ‘Sammattaniyāmaṃ okkamamāno sotāpattiphalaṃ vā sakadāgāmiphalaṃ vā anāgāmiphalaṃ vā arahattaṃ vā sacchikarissati’ti tñānametaṃ vijjati’ti. (*Anicca Sutta*, A 6. 98)

- 185 So ‘idaṃ dukkhaṇ’ti yoniso manasikaroti, ‘ayaṃ dukkhasamudayo’ti yoniso manasikaroti, ‘ayaṃ dukkhanirodho’ti yoniso manasikaroti, ‘ayaṃ dukkhanirodhagāmini paṭipadā’ti yoniso manasikaroti. Tassa evaṃ yoniso manasikaroto tiṇi saṃyojanāni pahīyanti – sakkāyadiṭṭhi, vicikicchā, silabbataparāmāso. Ime vuccanti, bhikkhave, āsavā dassanā pahātabbā. (*Sabbāsava Sutta*, M2)
- 186 In the discourse on the turning of the wheel of Dhamma (S56.11) the Buddha speaks of his own three revolutions. In this account it is not so evident that it is a *process* in three stages, because – as it appears – all three took place in a single night.
- 187 อะไรี่ไม่นี่ This sentence comes up in many of his recorded talks.
- 188 Tassa asārattassa asaṃyuttassa asammūḷhassa ādinavānupassino viharato āyatiṃ pañcupādānakkhandhā apacayaṃ gacchanti. Taṇhā cassa ponobbhavikā nandirāgasahagatā tatrataṭṭrābhinandinī, sā cassa pahiyanti. Tassa kāyikāpi darathā pahiyanti, cetasikāpi darathā pahiyanti; kāyikāpi santāpā pahiyanti, cetasikāpi santāpā pahiyanti; kāyikāpi parilāhā pahiyanti, cetasikāpi parilāhā pahiyanti. So kāyasukhampi cetosukhampi paṭisaṃvedeti. Yā tathābhūtaṃsa diṭṭhi sāssa hoti sammādiṭṭhi; yo tathābhūtaṃsa saṅkappo svāssa hoti sammāsaṅkappo; yo tathābhūtaṃsa vāyāmo svāssa hoti sammāvāyāmo; yā tathābhūtaṃsa sati sāssa hoti sammāsati; yo tathābhūtaṃsa samādhī svāssa hoti sammāsamādhī. Pubbeva kho paṇassa kāyakammaṃ vacikammaṃ ājīvo supārisuddho hoti. Evamassāyaṃ ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo bhāvanāpāripūriṃ gacchati.
- Tassa evaṃ imaṃ ariyaṃ aṭṭhaṅgikaṃ maggaṃ bhāvayato cattāropi satipaṭṭhānā bhāvanāpāripūriṃ gacchanti, cattāropi sammāpadhānā bhāvanāpāripūriṃ gacchanti, cattāropi iddhipādā bhāvanāpāripūriṃ gacchanti, pañcapi indriyāni bhāvanāpāripūriṃ gacchanti, pañcapi balāni bhāvanāpāripūriṃ gacchanti, sattapi bojjhaṅgā bhāvanāpāripūriṃ gacchanti. Tassime dve dhammā yuganandhā vattanti – samatho ca vipassanā ca. So ye dhammā abhiññā pariññeyyā te dhamme abhiññā pariññāti. Ye dhammā abhiññā pahātabbā te dhamme abhiññā pajahati. Ye dhammā abhiññā bhāvetabbā te dhamme abhiññā bhāveti. Ye dhammā abhiññā sacchikātabbā te dhamme abhiññā sacchikaroti.

Katame ca, bhikkhave, dhammā abhiññā pariññeyyā? ‘Pañcupādānak-khandhā’ tissa vacanīyaṃ, seyyathidaṃ – rūpupādānak-khandho, vedanupādānak-khandho, saññupādānak-khandho, saṅkhārūpādānak-khandho, viññāṇupādānak-khandho. ime dhammā abhiññā pariññeyyā. Katame ca, bhikkhave, dhammā abhiññā pahātabbā? Avijjā ca bhava-taṇhā ca – ime dhammā abhiññā pahātabbā. Katame ca, bhikkhave, dhammā abhiññā bhāvetabbā? Samatho ca vipassanā ca – ime dhammā abhiññā bhāvetabbā. Katame ca, bhikkhave, dhammā abhiññā sacchikātabbā? Vijjā ca vimutti ca – ime dhammā abhiññā sacchikātabbā’ti. (*Mahāsaḷāyatana Sutta*, M 149)

189 Seyyathāpi, bhikkhave, daharo kumāro mando uttānaseyyako hatthena vā pādena vā aṅgāraṃ akkamitvā khippameva paṭisaṃharati; evameva kho, bhikkhave, dhammatā esā diṭṭhisampannassa puggalassa – ‘kiñcāpi tathārūpiṃ āpattiṃ āpajjati yathārūpāya āpattiyā vuṭṭhānaṃ paññāyati, atha kho naṃ khippameva satthari vā viññūsu vā sabrahmacārisu deseti vivarati uttānikaroti; desetvā vivaritvā uttānikatvā āyatiṃ saṃvaraṃ āpajjati.’ (*Kosambiya Sutta*, M 48)

190 Dvemaṇi, bhikkhave, balāni. Katamaṇi dve? Paṭisaṅkhānabalaṇca bhāvanābalaṇca. Katamaṇca, bhikkhave, paṭisaṅkhānabalaṇ? Idha, bhikkhave, ekacco iti paṭisaṅcikkhati – ‘kāyaduccaritassa kho pāpako vipāko diṭṭhe ceva dhamme abhisamparāyaṇca, vacīduccaritassa pāpako vipāko diṭṭhe ceva dhamme abhisamparāyaṇca, manoduccaritassa pāpako vipāko diṭṭhe ceva dhamme abhisamparāyaṇcā’ti. So iti paṭisaṅkhāya kāyaduccaritaṃ pahāya kāyasucaritaṃ bhāveti, vacīduccaritaṃ pahāya vacīsucaritaṃ bhāveti, manoduccaritaṃ pahāya manosucaritaṃ bhāveti, suddhaṃ attānaṃ pariharati. Idaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, paṭisaṅkhānabalaṇ.

Katamaṇca, bhikkhave, bhāvanābalaṇ. Tatra, bhikkhave, yamidaṃ bhāvanābalaṇ sekhānametaṃ balaṇ. Sekhañhi so, bhikkhave, balaṇ āgamma rāgaṃ pajahati, dosaṃ pajahati, mohaṃ pajahati. Rāgaṃ pahāya, dosaṃ pahāya, mohaṃ pahāya yaṃ akusalaṃ na taṃ karoti, yaṃ pāpaṃ na taṃ sevati. Idaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, bhāvanābalaṇ. (A 2.11)

191 A certain teacher from one such school did notice after almost twenty years of teaching that his adverse attitude towards concentration was based on a description of the jhānas in the Visuddhimagga, and that the suttas tell a completely different story. Well what to do? After 20 years as a teacher of repute it was apparently impossible for him to admit his error: “Sorry, folks! I was wrong. Let’s start anew.” Instead he had a brilliant idea, “There are *two* kinds of jhāna – Visuddhimagga-jhāna and sutta-jhāna.” This idea was published complete with a comparison of those two types of jhāna. Unfortunately the higher, more general level common to both types, which is necessary for a valid comparison, was missing. For the same reason my attempt to communicate with the author failed.

A little treat for those who read the notes too – here an illustration of this topic by an accomplished master:

... It’s like the turtle and the fish. The turtle lives in two worlds: the world on land and the world in the water. As for the fish, it lives only in one world, the water. If it were to get on land, it would die.

One day, when a turtle came down into the water, it told a group of fish about how much fun it was to be on land: The lights and colours were pretty, and there were none of the difficulties that came from being in the water.

The fish were intrigued and wanted to see what it was like on land, so they asked the turtle, “Is it very deep on land?”

The turtle answered, “What would be deep about it? It’s land.”

The fish: “Are there lots of waves on land?”

The turtle: “What would be wavy about it? It’s land.”

The fish: “Is it murky with mud?”

The turtle: “What would be murky about it? It’s land.”

Note the questions asked by the fish. They simply take their experience of water to ask the turtle, and the turtle can do nothing but say no. (*Luang Pū Dūn Atulo*)

ยกตัวอย่างเช่น เต่ากับปลา เต่าอยู่ใต้สองโลก คือ โลกบนบกกับโลกในน้ำ ส่วนปลาอยู่ใต้โลกเดียว คือในน้ำ ขึ้นมาบนบกก็ตายหมด วันหนึ่งเต่าลงไปในน้ำ แล้วก็พรรณนาความสุขสบายให้ปลาฟัง ว่ามันมีแต่ความสุขสบายแสงสีสวยงาม ไม่ต้องลำบากเหมือนอยู่ในน้ำ ปลาพากันฟังด้วยความสนใจ และอยากเห็นบก จึงถามเต่าว่า บนบกนั้นลึกมากไหม เต่าว่า มันจะลึกอะไร ก็มันบก – เอ บนบกนั้นมีคลื่นมากไหม – มันจะคลื่นอะไร ก็มันบก – เอ บนบกนั้นมีเปลือกตมมากไหม – มันจะมีเปลือกตมอะไร ก็มันบก

ให้สังเกตดูคำที่ปลาถาม เอาแต่ความรู้ที่มีอยู่ในน้ำมาถามเต่า เต่าก็ได้แต่ปฏิเสธ (หลวงปู่ฝาดไฉ้, หน้า ๑๐๔ [#83])

- 192 Katamo pañāyē, samādhi, katame dhammā samādhinimittā, katame dhammā samādhiparikkhārā, katamā samādhibhāvanā’ti? – Yā kho, āvuso visākha, cittassa ekaggatā ayaṃ samādhi; cattāro satipaṭṭhānā samādhinimittā; cattāro sammappadhānā samādhiparikkhārā. Yā tesāmyeva dhammānaṃ āsevanā bhāvanā bahulikammaṃ, ayaṃ ettha samādhibhāvanā’ti. (*Cūḷavedalla Sutta*, M44)

- 193 So ime pañca nīvaraṇe pahāya cetaso upakkilese paññāya dubbali-karaṇe kāye kāyānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā vineyya loke abhiññhādomanassaṃ. vedanāsu ... pe ... citte ... pe ... dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā vineyya loke abhiññhādomanassaṃ ... Tameṇaṃ tathāgato uttariṃ vineti – ‘ehi tvaṃ, bhikkhu, kāye kāyānupassī viharāhi, mā ca kāmūpasamhitāṃ vitakkaṃ vitakkesi. Vedanāsu ... citte... dhammesu dhammānupassī viharāhi, mā ca kāmūpasamhitāṃ vitakkaṃ vitakkesi’ti. So vitakkavicārānaṃ vūpasamā ajjhattaṃ sampasādanāṃ cetaso ekodibhāvaṃ avitakkaṃ avicāraṃ samādhijam pītisukhaṃ dutiyaṃ jhānaṃ upasampajja viharati. (*Dantabhūmi Sutta*, M125)

This is an unusual description of the first jhāna. But the standard formulae are not to be taken as pigeonholes. They are pointers, which have varying shades of usefulness for the respective practitioners. In the suttas there are descriptions of concentration in two, three or five stages (e.g. in M128).

Or, in the words of a contemporary Thai master: “Concentration does not have signposts.” – สมานไม่มีป้าย (พระอาจารย์ตัน/Ācān Tan Thiracitto Bhikkhu)

- 194 So evaṃ samāhite citte parisuddhe pariyodāte anaṅgaṇe vigatūpakkilese mudubhūte kammaniye ṭhite āneñjappatte āsavānaṃ khayaññāya cittaṃ abhininnāmeti. So idaṃ dukkhaṃ'ti yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti, ayaṃ dukkhasamudayo'ti yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti, ayaṃ dukkhanirodho'ti yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti, ayaṃ dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā'ti yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti. Ime āsavā'ti yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti, ayaṃ āvasamudayo'ti yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti, ayaṃ āsavanirodho'ti yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti, ayaṃ āsavanirodhagāminī paṭipadā'ti yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti. Tassa evaṃ jānato evaṃ passato kāmāsavāpi cittaṃ vimuccati, bhavāsavāpi cittaṃ vimuccati, avijjāsavāpi cittaṃ vimuccati. Vimuttasmiṃ vimuttamiti ñāṇaṃ hoti – 'khīṇā jāti, vusitaṃ brahmacariyaṃ, kataṃ karaṇiyaṃ, nāparaṃ itthattāyā'ti pajānāti. (*Mahā-Assapura Sutta*, M 39)
- 195 Puna caparaṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sabbaso nevasaññānāsaññāyatanaṃ samatikkamma saññāvedayitanirodhaṃ upasampajja viharati, paññāya cassa disvā āsavā parikkhīṇā honti. (*Nivāpa Sutta*, M 25)
- 196 Cessation of perception and feeling is not a coma. The entry happens in full awareness. In my life I had a few general anaesthetics. I tried to follow the “fading” mindfully and aware. Unfortunately I did not experience the cessation of perception and feeling, only the sag of my mindfulness.
- 197 There are not only gradual differences between the jhānas. There are enormous changes that require a considerable amount of letting go. Turning away from the sphere of wishing is difficult. Letting go of thinking and the thinker is difficult (2nd jhāna). Letting go of rapture (3rd jhāna) is even more difficult, and letting go of pleasant feeling (4th jhāna) even more so.
- 198 Atammayataṃ, bhikkhave, nissāya atammayataṃ āgamma yāyaṃ upekkhā ekattā ekattasitā taṃ pajahatha, taṃ samatikkamatha. Evaṃmetissā pahānaṃ hoti, evametissā samatikkamo hoti. (*Salāyatana-vibhaṅga Sutta*, M 137)

- 199 So iti paṭisañcikkhati – ‘idampi paṭhamam jhānam abhisankhataṃ abhi-sañcetaṃ. Yaṃ kho pana kiñci abhisankhataṃ abhisañcetaṃ tadaniccam nirodhadhammaṃ’ti pajānāti. So tattha t̥hito āsavānaṃ khayam pāpuṇāti. No ce āsavānaṃ khayam pāpuṇāti, teneva dhammarāgena tāya dhammanandiyā pañcannaṃ orambhāgiyānaṃ saṃyojanānaṃ parikkhayā opapātiko hoti tattha parinibbāyī anāvattidhammo tasmā lokā. (*Aṭṭhakanāgara Sutta*, M 52)
- 200 So yadeva tattha hoti rūpagataṃ vedanāgataṃ saññāgataṃ saṅkhāragataṃ viññāpagataṃ te dhamme aniccato dukkhato rogato gaṇḍato sal-lato aghato ābādhato parato palokato suññato anattato samanupassati. so tehi dhammehi cittaṃ paṭivāpeti. So tehi dhammehi cittaṃ paṭivāpetvā amatāya dhātuyā cittaṃ upasaṃharati – ‘etaṃ santaṃ etaṃ paṇitaṃ yadidaṃ sabbasaṅkhārasamatho sabbūpadhipaṭinissaggo taṇhākkhayo virāgo nirodho nibbānaṃ’ti. So tattha t̥hito āsavānaṃ khayam pāpuṇāti. (*Mahāmālunkya Sutta*, M 64)
- 201 Pañcime, bhikkhave, kāmagaṇā. Katame pañca? Cakkhaviññeyyā rūpā it̥thā kantā manāpā piyarūpā kāmūpasamhitā rajanīyā, sotaviññeyyā saddā, ghānaviññeyyā gandhā, jivhaviññeyyā rasā, kāyaviññeyyā phoṭṭhabbā it̥thā kantā manāpā piyarūpā kāmūpasamhitā rajanīyā – ime kho, bhikkhave, pañca kāmagaṇā. Yaṃ kho, bhikkhave, ime pañca kāmagaṇe paṭicca uppajjati sukhaṃ somanassaṃ idaṃ vuccati kāmāsukhaṃ mīhasukhaṃ puthujjanasukhaṃ anariyasukhaṃ. ‘Na āsevitabbaṃ, na bhāvetabbaṃ, na bahulikātabbaṃ, bhāyitabbaṃ etassa sukhassā’ti – vadāmi. Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu vivicca kāmehi vivicca akusalehi dhammehi savitakkaṃ savicāraṃ vivekaṃ pītisukhaṃ paṭhamam jhānam upasampajja viharati ... idaṃ vuccati nekkhammasukhaṃ pavivekasukhaṃ upasamasukhaṃ sambodhisukhaṃ. ‘Āsevitabbaṃ, bhāvetabbaṃ, bahulikātabbaṃ, na bhāyitabbaṃ etassa sukhassā’ti – vadāmi. (*Araṇavibhaṅga Sutta*, M 139)
- 202 Satto guhāyaṃ bahunābhichanno, tiṭṭhaṃ naro mohanasmim pagālho./ Dūre vivekā hi tathāvidho so, kāmā hi loke na hi suppahāya./ Icchānidānā bhavasātabaddhā, te duppamuñcā na hi aññamokkhā./ Pacchā pure vāpi apekkhamānā, imeva kāme purimeva jappaṃ. (*Guhāṭṭhaka Sutta*, Sn 772/773)

203 ‘Yathodhi kho pana me cattam vantan muttam pahinam patinissatthan’ti labhati atthavedam, labhati dhammavedam, labhati dhammūpasamhitam pāmojjan; pamuditassa pīti jāyati, pītimanassa kāyo passambhati, passaddhakāyo sukham vedeti, sukhino cittam samādhiyati. (*Vatthūpama Sutta*, M7)

204 Idha, sārīputta, ekacco puggalo sīlesu paripūrakārī hoti, samādhismim paripūrakārī, paññāya mattaso kārī. So pañcannam orambhāgiyanam saṃyojanānam parikkhayā antarāparinibbāyi hoti.

Puna caparam, sārīputta, idhekacco puggalo sīlesu paripūrakārī hoti, samādhismim mattaso kārī, paññāya mattaso kārī. So tiṇṇam saṃyojanānam parikkhayā rāgadosamohānam tanuttā sakadāgāmī hoti, sakideva imam lokam āgantvā dukkhassantaṃ karoti ...

Puna caparam, sārīputta, idhekacco puggalo sīlesu paripūrakārī hoti, samādhismim mattaso kārī, paññāya mattaso kārī. So tiṇṇam saṃyojanānam parikkhayā sattakkhattuparamo hoti, sattakkhattuparamam deve ca manusse ca sandhāvitvā saṃsaritvā dukkhassantaṃ karoti. Ayaṃ, sārīputta, navamo puggalo saupādiseso kālam kurumāno parimutto nirayā parimutto tiracchānayoniyā parimutto pettivisayā parimutto apāyaduggativinipātā. (*Saupādisesa Sutta*, A 9.12)

205 I personally think that the second jhāna would be quite good for this, because an important type of determination disappears there: speech-determination, thinking. Silence on the inner airwaves. And no more writing either. If I should err, and if one of my readers makes it with just the first jhāna, please drop me a line.

206 So vata, bhikkhave, bhikkhu saṅgaṇikārāmo saṅgaṇikarato saṅgaṇikārāmatam anuyutto, gaṇārāmo gaṇarato gaṇārāmatam anuyutto, eko paviveke abhiraṃsati’ti netam tṭhānam vijjati. ‘Eko paviveke anabhiraṃsanto cittassa nimittam gahessati’ti netam tṭhānam vijjati. ‘Cittassa nimittam agaṇhanto sammādiṭṭhim paripūressati’ti netam tṭhānam vijjati. ‘Sammādiṭṭhim aparipūretvā sammāsamādhim paripūressati’ti netam tṭhānam vijjati. ‘Sammāsamādhim aparipūretvā saṃyojanāni pajahissati’ti netam tṭhānam vijjati. ‘Saṃyojanāni appahāya nibbānam sacchikarissati’ti netam tṭhānam vijjati.

So vata, bhikkhave, bhikkhu na saṅgaṇikārāmo na saṅgaṇikarato na saṅgaṇikārāmatam anuyutto, na gaṇārāmo na gaṇarato na gaṇārāmatam anuyutto, eko paviveke abhiramissati’ti ṭhānametaṃ vijjati. ‘Eko paviveke abhiramanto cittassa nimittam gahessati’ti ṭhānametaṃ vijjati. ‘Cittassa nimittam gaṇhanto sammādiṭṭhiṃ paripūressati’ti ṭhānametaṃ vijjati. ‘Sammādiṭṭhiṃ paripūretvā sammāsamādhim paripūressati’ti ṭhānametaṃ vijjati. ‘Sammāsamādhim paripūretvā saṃyojanāni pajahissati’ti ṭhānametaṃ vijjati. ‘Saṃyojanāni pahāya nibbānam sacchikarissati’ti ṭhānametaṃ vijjati’ti (*Saṅgaṇikārāma Sutta*, A 6.68)

207 Yāvata, bhikkhave, dhammā saṅkhata, ariyo atṭhaṅgiko maggo tesam aggamakkhāyati. Ye, bhikkhave, ariye atṭhaṅgike magge pasannā, agge te pasannā. Agge kho pana pasannānam aggo vipāko hoti. (*Aggappasāda Sutta*, A 4.34)

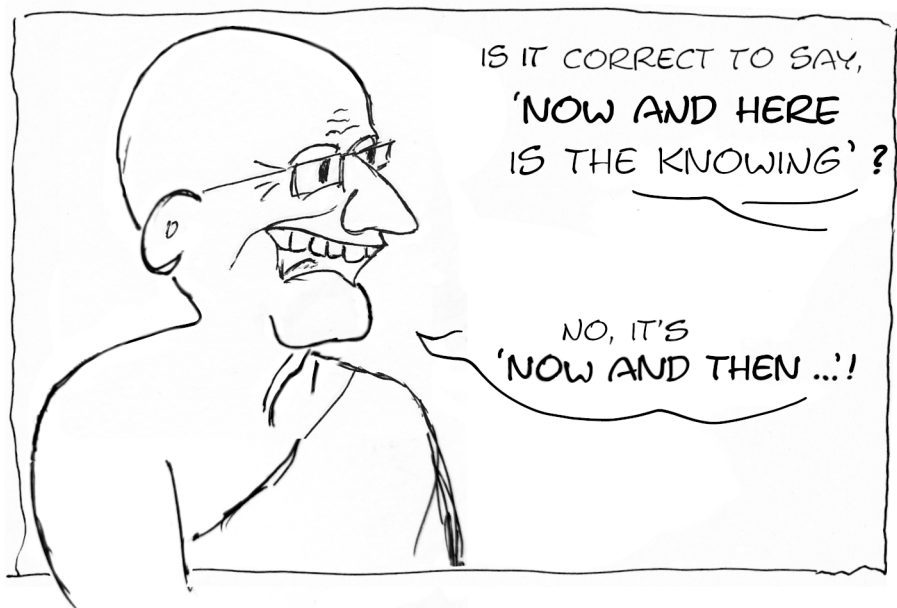
208 Usefully ... Prof. Rhys Davids ... quotes Neumann’s rendering of *nāma* and *rūpa* as ‘subject and object’. This is a helpful perspective since, for some, the ‘cessation of consciousness’ or ‘the destruction of mind and body’ might seem like depressing or nihilistic phrases, whereas ‘the dissolution of subject/object dualities’ and the freedom ensuing from that, sounds considerably more appealing. In this light it’s also worthy of note that the tangible qualities of the mind where no footing can be found for everyday dualisms include ‘radiance’ and ‘limitlessness’ – hardly uninviting qualities either. (*The Island*, p. 136, Amaravati, 2020).

209 Tiṭṭhanteva kho, bhikkhave, tattheva pañcendriyāni. Athettha sutavato ariyasāvakassa avijjā pahīyati, vijjā uppajjati. Tassa avijjāvirāgā vijjuppādā ‘asmī’tipissa na hoti; ‘ayamahasmaṃ’tipissa na hoti; ‘bhavissan’ti ... ‘na bhavissan’ti ... rūpī ... arūpī ... saññī ... asaññī ... ‘nevasaññināsaññī bhavissan’tipissa na hoti’ti. (*Samanupassanā Sutta*, S 22.47)

210 Phusanti phassā upadhiṃ paṭicca, nirūpadhiṃ kena phuseyyu phassā’ti. (*Sakkāra Sutta*, Ud 14)

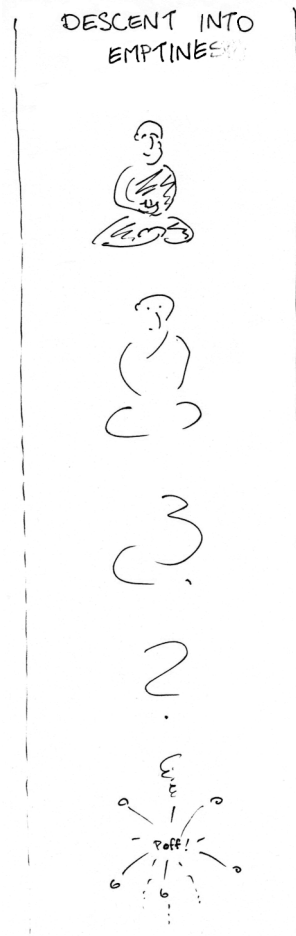
211 เวทนากับร่างกายนั้น มีอยู่ตามธรรมชาติของมัน แต่ไม่ได้เสวย เวทนานั้นเลย (หลวงปู่ฝาง
ไว้, หน้า ๑๒๐ [my own translation])

- 212 Sabbamaññitānaṃ tveva, bhikkhu, samatikkamā muni santoti vuccati. Muni kho pana, bhikkhu, santo na jāyati, na jīyati, na mīyati, na kuppatti, na piheti. Tañhissa, bhikkhu, natthi yena jāyetha, ajāyamāno kiṃ jīyissati, ajīyamāno kiṃ mīyissati, amīyamāno kiṃ kuppissati, akupamāno kiṃ pihessati? (*Dhātuvibhaṅga Sutta*, M 140)
- 213 Saññaṃ pariññā vitareyya oghaṃ, pariggahesu muni nopalitto. Abbūhasallo caramappamatto, nāsisatī lokamimaṃ parañcāti. (*Guhaṭṭhaka Sutta*, Sn 779)
- 214 Seyyathāpi, bhikkhave, puriso alagaddatthiko alagaddagavesī alagadda-pariyesanaṃ caramāno. So passeyya mahantaṃ alagaddaṃ. Tameva bhoge vā naṅgutṭhe vā gaṇheyya. Tassa so alagaddo paṭiparivattitvā hatthe vā bāhāya vā aññatarasmim vā aṅgapaccaṅge ḍaseyya. So tato-nidānaṃ maraṇaṃ vā nigaccheyya maraṇamattaṃ vā dukkhaṃ. Taṃ kissa hetu? Duggahitattā, bhikkhave, alagaddassa. Evameva kho, bhikkhave, idhekacce moghapurisā dhammaṃ pariyāpuṇanti ... Te taṃ dhammaṃ pariyāpuṇitvā tesāṃ dhammānaṃ paññāya atthaṃ na upaparikkhanti. Tesāṃ te dhammā paññāya atthaṃ anupaparikkhantaṃ na nijjhānaṃ khamanti. Te upārambhānisamsā ceva dhammaṃ pariyāpuṇanti itivādappamokkhānisamsā ca. Yassa catthāya dhammaṃ pariyāpuṇanti tañcassa atthaṃ nānubhonti. Tesāṃ te dhammā duggahitā dīgharattaṃ ahitāya dukkhāya saṃvattanti. Taṃ kissa hetu? Duggahitattā bhikkhave dhammānaṃ. (*Agaladdūpama Sutta*, M 22)
- 215 รู้ไม่เกิดรู้ไม่ตาย รู้ไปมากก็ไม่เป็นไร (พระหล้า เขมปตฺโต, หน้า ๑๖๙ [214])
- 216 *Clearing the Path*, p. 233



Concluding the Postscript

... and finally



This book is about the Teaching of the Buddha.

It tastes of freedom.

It is only suitable for one who is a *sensing reader*.

It does not contain thickeners of historical perspectives.

It is free from preservatives of distanced objectivity.

It is without flavour enhancers of idealist positions.



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Mettiko Bhikkhu



against the **grain**